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NEDL TRANSFER



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CHARLES The CHAUFFEUR



By

S·E·KISER

KD12627

Robt. W. Chatfield.



**Charles
The Chauffeur**





“‘Be Careful Not to Cripple Him for Life,’ She Said.”

Charles The Chauffeur

By

S. E. KISER

Author of

"Love Sonnets of an Office Boy,"

"Ballads of the Busy Days," etc.



NEW YORK

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Charles the Chauffeur

I

"WHEN I came to be Mrs. Thurlow's shawfer," said Charles, "the first thing she asked me was: 'Mr. Charles, are your nerves steady?'"

"How can I ever forget the sweetness of the dear little woman's voice? Though I wouldn't want her to find out I said so—just now. The next day she told me she wanted me to take her to the park in the runabout, so she could see how I performed. It was a munificent day. Before we had went a mile—and how red her cheeks were—she said: 'Charles, you seem to know all about it. You might see how near you can come to that old man without hittin' him.'"

"The old gent was just startin' across the street about a hundred yards in front of us



"I Nipped the Buttons From the Back of His Coat."

The Chauffeur

when she spoke. I drove ahead full speed and tooted 'im to a stand-still. He stopped in the middle of the road, paralyzed. The little machine worked like a charm. I nipped the two buttons from the back of his long coat as clean as you could of done it with a pair of shears. 'Charles,' she said, 'I'm proud of you—I really am. How poor dead Alfred would of enjoyed that.'

"You should of saw how sweet her mouth looked when she smiled at me. I made up my mind years ago that I would never get married, knowin' how a man's wife often keeps him down if she can't rise to nobler things with him. My uncle Amzi was a warnin' to me in that respects. Uncle Amzi made a great mistake by marryin' a woman who hadn't the soul to rise with him. She was all right as the wife of a farmer, but when he outgrew the farm and moved to town to run a livery stable she wasn't the woman to take her place beside him in society.

"But I would be willin' to take Juliet and risk everything. Of course I only call her

Charles

Juliet in private. I have wrote a splendid poem about her. I done it one day on the head of a salt barrel. But I must wait. She has only been a widow a little over a year, and people in society have to show their proper respects about such things. It was very sad the way she lost him. They were tryin' to break the ladies' road record.

“ ‘I was goin' along at about a forty clip,’ she says, ‘and Alfred was coachin' me. We were goin' down a steep hill, with a sharp curve at the bottom. He told me to go to the right; but I never could tell right from left in a hurry without stoppin' to think which hand I hold my fork in when I eat blue-points, so I went the wrong way. The next thing I knew I was sittin' alone on the green bank of a muck pond. Over near the middle of it there were two things stickin' up in a kind of a V-shape. After a while I knew they were Alfred's legs. Poor boy! I recanized them by his trousers. Alfred always had such beautiful taste in trousers. Well, in one way,’ she says, sighin' kind of sad, ‘perhaps it was

The Chauffeur

better so, as long as it had to be. I couldn't of looked him in the face, anyway, after what happened.'

"We went on through the park, her never so much as givin' an extra wink when we took the short corners. Then's when she told me about the way Alfred's spark went out. I was goin' to turn back toward home after a while, but she says: 'Charles, I think I'll let you take me out to the Pocahontas Club.'

"So we were soon goin' up the road at a twenty-mile clip, when out jumps a constable with a watch in his hand, hollerin' at us to stop.

"'Mercy!' she says, 'he's goin' to arrest us. What can we do?'

"'I'll run over 'im if you say so,' says I.

"'No,' she says, 'he may have a family to support. You must always think of such things, Charles. We mustn't do anything to make them build any more orphan asylums. Orphan asylums make me feel dismal. The people that put them up generally show such poor taste about their archeytexture.'

Charles

"We had slowed down, and I asked the chap what he wanted.

"'I've got to arrest you,' says he. 'You've been goin' forty miles an hour.'

"'Smile at 'im,' I whispered. Then I says to the Reuben:

"'Are you willin' to put that in writin'? Because I want it for advertisin' purposes. It'll be worth a lot to my company.'

"'Go ahead,' says he, smilin' back at Juliet, and off we went.

"'Charles,' she says, 'you are a very clever man.'

"'If you'll excuse me for sayin' it,' says I, 'it was your smile that done it.' Turnin' a woman's head's as easy as missin' a train if you know how.

"You should have saw the Johnnies flock around her at the club. She had all the other girls there beat a hundred miles on looks and style. It was late when we started back, and as we turned down the road she says:

"'Now Charles, you must break the record gettin' me home. I've made a bet with Bertie

The Chauffeur

Flippendike that when he calls me up in forty-seven minutes I'll be there to answer the 'phone.'

"We'd made about a quarter of the distance in less than 'leven minutes and had started down a long stretch goin' beautiful, when a farmer drove out of a field and turned up our way. His horses commenced to walk on their hind feet and he waved at us to stop. The nerve of some farmers would make them rich if they had any judgment back of it.

" 'Do you think you can get through?' she asked.

" 'If I can't,' says I, 'it'll be because this machine won't cut meat.'

"In about three seconds the farmer was under his horses and the wagon in the ditch. I hope the old chap got out of it all right, because I never believe in takin' life where you can help it if you're not tryin' for a new record; but it was his own fault. He might of came out and peeped before turnin' up the road. Luck seemed to be against us, though.

"We'd only gone a few miles further when



16 **"The Nerve of Some Farmers Would Make Them Rich if They Had Any Judgment."**

The Chauffeur

we come to a place where they'd tore away a bridge over a culvert. It wasn't more than five or six feet wide, but it was deep and there was no way to go around. There was a board fence handy, though, and I got busy with it. I figured that by pilin' the boards up three or four deep and makin' two tracks we could get over. Just as I got the track fixed a bull chased us; but we got across all right, and the bull fell in the ditch, missin' us by about a foot and a half.

"'Charles,' says Juliet, 'you managed that beautiful. How poor, dear Alfred would of enjoyed it.'

"Juliet's a game little lady. She's the right sort. I like her. We'd of got home five minutes ahead of time if one of our tires hadn't flattened out. When it went off we were slammed against a tree, and I thought at first she was dead. I knowed she'd lose the bet if I stopped to find out about it. So I picked her up and started ahead again, holdin' her with one arm. We were turnin' the corner a block from home when she begin to come

Charles

to. I was afraid she'd lost the bet, and me the chance to marry a lady with money to use for stuffin' the furniture, but as I carried her up the steps I could hear the telephone bell ringin', the butler havin' opened the door.

" 'Here,' I says, holdin' her up to the instrument and speakin' soft and gentle, while Mr. Cavendish, the butler, looked as though the blow was goin' to be too much for him, 'Bertie's ringin'.'

" She took the receiver and, with me still holdin' her very tender, says:

" 'Hello! Is that you, Bertie? Come around to-morrow and I'll tell you how you lost.' "



"With Me Still Holdin' Her Very Tender."

Charles

II

"IT didn't take me long after I'd commenced shawfing for the beautiful Mrs. Thurlow," said Charles, "to find out that Bertie Flippendike was in love with her. Not that Juliet—I always call her Juliet to my friends—seemed to care so much for him; but Miss Higgins, her maid, told me a few things that made me anxious.

"I was takin' Sadie out to the Chillingworths', where Juliet and Bertie were stayin' at a house party, and I made myself confidential with the girl, lettin' her think I dreamed about her in the night.

" 'Mrs. Thurlow don't care the least bit about him,' says Sadie, after I'd give her a few looks that seemed to make her feel glad she was livin', 'but she keeps him dotty on account of Puss Waddums. Puss has said some real mean things about us, and she's crazy over Bertie.'

" 'What has Puss been sayin'?' says I.

The Chauffeur

“ ‘ Well, she’s told people that Mrs. Thurlow would of been a grass-widow by this time



“ I Made Myself Confidential With the Girl.”

if luck hadn't made her the other kind, and that's a slander, because I heard them talkin' about it dozens of times, and he never was willin' to give her a quarter of the alimony she was holdin' out for.'



“‘I Heard Them Talkin’ About It Dozens of Times.’”

The Chauffeur

“ I thought it would be a pretty good plan for me to help Puss to get Bertie, if I ever had a chance ; but of course I didn't let on to Sadie. While the house party was goin' on Juliet telephoned me to come out with the machine. They'd got up a mixed road race, and she expected me to help her win it.

“ When we lined up for the start, there was me and Juliet, Bertie and Puss and Chillingworth and his wife. It was sixty miles on a road none of us had ever been over before. I could see Bertie was jealous the way he looked at me, and I didn't blame him. You never seen anything as beautiful as Juliet was that afternoon.

“ ‘ Charles,’ she says, ‘ there's a twenty-dollar gold piece in it for you if we win.’

“ She's one of the people that deserve to be rich, although I told her I hoped she didn't think I wasn't always ready to do my best for her without wishin' for any more than to make her glad. She looked at me queer, and for about a minute I was afraid I had went too far. The more you study women the



"You Never Seen Anything as Beautiful as Juliet."

The Chauffeur

more you are never sure of them. They want you to think they're angels, but sometimes it makes trouble if you up and tell them you think what they know you know they want you to think. You have to go at such things diplomatic. What does a woman show her bare shoulders for? Because she wants you to think they're munificent, and as long as you show by the way you look at them that you think they're grand she's your friend. But if you went up and said: 'Ma'am, I'm willin' to bet fifteen dollars you've got the best shoulders in this town,' she'd want to have you run in for disorderly conduct. But Juliet seen she was dealin' with a gentleman, so she smiled beautiful, sayin':

"'Thank you, Charles. I am almost afraid sometimes I am gettin' to depend on you too much.'

"There's only one thing you can be sure of about women. Some of 'em wear finer clo's than others, and more jewelry; some of 'em have to scrub, while others have plate glass in the windows, but they all like pickles.

Charles

“ Bertie and Puss started ahead, then Juliet and me, and Chillingworth and his wife came last. We hadn't went more than a mile or two before we seen Bertie and Puss tryin' to get past a fellow in a buggy. The road was narrow and he stuck to the middle of it, so they couldn't go around him without gettin' in the ditch. When we come up Juliet asked Bertie why he didn't go ahead.

“ ‘The fellow won't give me room,’ says Bertie. ‘He's positively indecent.’

“ ‘Let us have a chance,’ says my lady, and Bertie drew out to one side, lettin' us past. ‘Now,’ she says to me, ‘show him how.’

“ ‘I can't,’ says I.

“ ‘What do you mean?’ she says.

“ When a sweet little woman like Juliet gets flared up she can show her teeth so you'll have the finest kind of thrills. I looked at her with my whole soul, and said:

“ ‘It's risky. If you got hurt I'd never touch a lever again.’

“ You could have saw by her look that something would of happened if we'd of been

The Chauffeur

alone, but of course she couldn't there before Bertie and Puss. But she ordered me to go ahead and see if I couldn't take off a couple of his wheels, so I told her to get her handkerchief ready so she could wipe it off if she got splattered by anything, and in a minute it was all over. I knocked off two wheels and flung him up on the bank at the side of the road. The last we seen of the outfit the horse was trottin' around through a field, with what was left of the front end of the buggy.

" 'How Alfred would of enjoyed that,' she said. 'He was an awful bungler himself, but he could always appreciate a clever thing.'

" Juliet waved her handkerchief at Puss and Bertie, and we went ahead at about a fifty clip.

" 'Poor Bertie,' she says, smilin' sweet at me, 'I'm afraid he ought to be drivin' a pony cart.'

" 'Oh,' says I, just to see what she'd say, 'he'd be all right if he was where I am. It all depends on the machine and the lady that's givin' a man the encouragement.'

Charles

“ ‘No, Charles, it’s not that alone.’

“She took a long breath. But a man that’s wise never gets in too much of a hurry. A friend of mine that was a coachman once and married the old gent’s daughter had the right notion.

“ ‘Make ’er sigh, make ’er fret, make ’er wait,’ says he, ‘and there you have it.’ If he’d of let her see at the start that he wanted to elope she’d of had him discharged. If you know how to handle women they come easy.

“The road was good ahead, and Juliet wanted to operate the machine, so we changed seats and she zipped on beautiful till we got about half-way down a steep hill. Then she bumped over a boulder and the next thing I knew I was swingin’ easy in the top of a maple about forty feet back from the road. I got down and looked around for Juliet. The machine was half-way up the bank. Before long I found the little lady in a fence corner, me goin’ backward to’rd her, bein’ a perfect gentleman, even if she wasn’t noticin’ that one of her ankles wasn’t covered up.

The Chauffeur

“ She looked up a little sad when I stooped over her; but I didn’t say anything. I slipped my arms around her and we were started again in less than a minute. After



“I Found the Lady in a Fence Corner.”

a while she commenced to cry. I asked her if she was hurt bad; but she didn’t answer and kept lettin’ her head kind of rest on my shoulder.

“ ‘ I’ll turn,’ says I, ‘ and we’ll go back.’ ”

Charles

“ ‘Don’t you think you can catch them?’ she asked, lookin’ pitiful.

“ ‘Catch who?’ says I.

“ ‘Bertie and the rest.’

“ ‘We’ll meet them on the way back.’

“ ‘Charles,’ she says, straightenin’ up, ‘do you mean to say they haven’t passed us?’

“ ‘Look back there,’ says I. We could see back across the valley where they were just startin’ down the hill.

“ ‘Go ahead,’ she said, and then put both hands on my arm and asked if I was hurt.

“ ‘Yes,’ says I, touchin’ myself over the heart, ‘I’m hurt pretty bad here.’

“ ‘Don’t let me forget,’ she says, ‘when we get back. Mr. Chillingworth has some horse liniment that’s fine for such things. You must rub yourself with it.’

“ ‘There’s no use expectin’ a woman to see a joke unless it’s marked down from something.’”

The Chauffeur

III

"ONE day when I was takin' Mrs. Thurlow out to the Pocahontas Club," said Charles, "she asked me how I'd like to go with her on an automobile trip from New York to Chicago. I told her I was ready to take an automobile trip around the world or to the moon with her, if she said the word. Think of travellin' hundreds of miles along country roads with a lady that made your heart jump up and hit you on the tonsils every time she looked you in the eyes!

"I can see that she's gettin' to lean on me more and more every day, and although I ain't anyways what you might call conceited I'd have to be pretty blind not to notice that she wants to take the trip just to have a chance to be alone with me. It's wonderful what a woman can think of when she makes up her mind to give a fellow a chance to woo and in time win her love, if he wants to.

Charles

"If Juliet only knew it, I'm ready to be the man of her brown-stone front any day; but I must keep on makin' her anxious. Women want the things they're afraid they can't get. Once when I was clerkin' in a grocery store there was a woman come in for a watermelon. We had a lot of good ones, but she looked at them all, and couldn't make up her mind which one to take. After a while I rolled one of them out to one side, sort of careless.

" 'I don't want that one,' she says, turnin' up her nose at it.

" 'Very well, ma'am,' says I, 'I was only puttin' it out of the way because it's sold.'

"She made up her mind right smack off that if she couldn't have that melon she wouldn't take any, and offered us ten cents extra for it.

"After that, whenever a woman come in for a melon I'd put the poorest little one away and pretend it was sold. They'd always want that one, and think we done them a favor by lettin' them have it for an extra price. It's

The Chauffeur

the same with men as with melons. Let a girl think she can't have you, and all you've got to do is agree to let the children be brought up in her church.

"So I must keep on for a while yet lettin' Juliet think I'm the melon that's laid away for somebody else. I think I'll have to make love to Sadie, her maid, a little just for practice and to keep Juliet gettin' anxiouser about me.

"There's one thing that bothers me some, though. I don't know how I'll ever have the nerve to give orders to Mr. Cavendish, the butler, after I get to be his master. That man makes me think I need quinine every time I get anywhere near him. I think after the weddin' I'll get Juliet to let me have her place in the country. Then I'll have four or five cows on it and send Cavendish out to take care of them, and whenever I ain't too busy helpin' Juliet make it pleasant for society, I'll go out and watch him weanin' the calves. I ain't much of a joker myself, but I can enjoy a good thing with the best of 'em, and

Charles

Cavendish has a few bumps comin' to him that I'm goin' to deliver.

“ Well, as me and Juliet was zippin' along



Mr. Cavendish.

nice and proper, goin' about thirty-five an hour, and the Rumbler never strainin' a bolt, out comes a flock of sheep about five or six

The Chauffeur

hundred yards away, fillin' the road from fence to fence.

“ ‘ Oh, pshaw ! ’ says Juliet. ‘ Now we’re goin’ to lose time, and I wanted you to make the run in thirty-three minutes from the park. Bertie Flippendike did it in thirty-four with his new Locomoco day before yesterday, and is boasting around that it’s going to be the record for the season. We had such a lovely start, too.’

“ ‘ Don’t worry about that,’ says I. ‘ It looks to me as though there might be a good deal of activity in the mutton business right away.’

“ It was still rainin’ sheep when we turned the bend nearly half a mile up the road ; but such things always make more or less trouble. We lost about ten minutes while I was tryin’ to get the wool out of the gearin’, although I will say that Juliet was patient about it. I felt like goin’ back to bump the fool of a farmer who had drove the critters in our way ; but the little lady said :

“ ‘ No, Charles, never cripple anybody just

Charles

for your own satisfaction. If you have to run over people when you are trying to break records, that is a different thing. It's an act of Providence if they get in front of you then, and your conscience can't wake you up in the night to ask questions about it. But I could never feel just right again if I let you turn back on purpose to run over a person. A human being is a human being, even though he couldn't tell the difference between a condenser and a transmission case.'

"It was no use to hurry after we'd got started again, for we couldn't break Bertie's record that trip, anyway; so Juliet wanted to turn off and go around by the Camelback road. A dozen of the club people had tried it; but none of them ever got up the hill.

"'If an automobile can go up there,' she says, lookin' at me with the love hangin' right out of her big, munificent eyes, 'I know you can make the Rumbler do it, Charles.'

"So we switched off, and after whizzin' down a long stretch for about three miles, without hardly a swerve, except once when

The Chauffeur

we run over a colt, we come to the hill that had stopped them all. It was nearly straight up and down, or at least it looked that way from off a piece. When you got to it it wasn't quite so bad, although it was about as steep as the roof of a barn. I started for it full speed, and we'd got about half-way up when Juliet give a scream.

"A team of horses without any driver was comin' down toward us, runnin' away. She probably wouldn't of minded it so much if there had been a man in the wagon. But it always seems to be such a waste to get in mix-ups where there's no people to be smashed.

"I don't s'pose more than one man out of a million would of got along in a case like that without losin' his head, though I never like to boast about myself. But there's one thing to always remember: never let a horse know you're afraid of him. That's a lesson I got from my Uncle John when I was a boy, him bein' a blacksmith. He could shoe horses that would kick other people through the roof, because he'd walk right up and show 'em his

Charles

confidence by grabbin' 'em by the legs before they had a chance to make up their minds whether they wanted him to or not.

"I remember there was a man by the name of Rooks had a horse he called Gypsy, because he got him in a trade from the Gypsies. That horse had kicked an anvil through a window in one shop where they tried to shoe him and another time he picked a blacksmith up and flung him out the door, where he lit in a top buggy that was goin' past with the County Judge in it. When they took him to Uncle John he started in to let the brute know he had met his master, by lookin' him in the eye. Gypsy looked back kind of thoughtful for a minute or so, and then seemed to see how it was and wiggled his ears sort of friendly. So Uncle John got the tools and stooped over to catch hold of a leg, when all of a sudden the horse grabbed him between the shoulders, broke the hitchin' strap, and after kickin' a hole through the bellows, started out.

"He run around the meetin'-house a few times, with Uncle John yellin' for help, and

The Chauffeur

then started toward home. But he must of got tired, for he threw Uncle John through the side of Hen Sisson's corn-crib, after goin' about a mile and a half, and they found him there, with hardly anything the matter, except one rib broke. Uncle John claimed the trouble happened because he got a cinder in his eye the day before, and wasn't in shape to give the horse the right kind of a look.

"So I kept right up the hill, and the runaway team comin' like a South Dakota widow on her way back to dear old New York. Juliet hadn't time to give more than one little squeal before it was all over; and I don't know exactly how it happened myself; but when I looked up my head was on her lap, and she was brushin' my hair back with one of her soft little hands. The Rumbler was tipped over on one side, and the team was scattered in about a dozen parts farther down the hill.

"I s'pose the trouble was that the horses didn't happen to notice my expression.

"We had to walk the rest of the way to the club; but it wasn't far, and it was worth a lot



"When I Looked Up My Head Was on Her Lap."

The Chauffeur

to see the kind look on Juliet's face and hear what she said about me havin' the blood of a true sportsman in me.

“ ‘That's one thing which always discouraged me with poor, dear Alfred,’ she said, speakin’ about her dead husband. ‘You couldn’t have made a real sportsman out of him any more than you could make a flying machine out of a leather coat.’ ”

Charles

IV

"I DON'T deny," said Charles, "that there's plenty of women that have more right to vote than some men; but at the same time we must remember that man is the noblest work of God, as Albert Springer, my old school-teacher, used to say. So I can't help thinkin' every little while that it's hardly right for me to be bossed by a woman. For men that ain't got no education and wasn't ever cut out for great things it's all right to get their orders from a headquarters that wears petticoats; but it's different with a man like me, although Juliet Thurlow is learnin' fast to treat me more like an equal than a hired man.

"That's one reason why I'm willin' to give up my old feelin's against marriage. Juliet needs a head of the house, and I'd hate to see her get some person that didn't have natural gifts for holdin' the job.

"Her and me chawfed out to her country-

The Chauffeur

place yesterday. It's a munificent estate, and I don't know as there's much about it I care to have changed.

" 'Poor Alfred!' she says, as we turned up the road; 'It's too bad he had to leave all this just when he got everything fixed as he wanted it; but he may be happier where he is now.'

" 'No,' says I, 'he ain't.'

" 'Don't tell me that,' she said. 'I can't believe it. He was a good Christian. There was only one higher-priced pew in St. Bartholomew's Church than ours, and I never knew him to run over anybody without paying all the funeral expenses and giving the family something besides.'

" 'It ain't that,' says I. 'How could he be happier, even if he had went to heaven in a gasoline chariot, with you still back here?'

" It seemed to touch her.

" 'Ah, Charles,' the dear lady said, with one of them smiles that make you feel as though you had a feather in your throat, 'I am afraid you are an invertebrate joker. Over there is the race course he had fixed up for his

Charles

own use. Alfred was planning to have the finest breeding farm in the country. Do you know anything about breeding?’

“I told her I had a reputation for good-breedin’ where I come from; but somehow it didn’t seem to make her want to go into the breedin’ business, and she said she thought it would be best to sell the place. Then she had a thought which shows that if women’s brains ain’t as big as men’s they still have reasonin’ powers that are sometimes worth payin’ attention to.

“‘I know what we’ll do with the track,’ she says. ‘We’ll use it for practising with the autos. Let’s go over and speed around a few times to see how it works.’

“After we done that till it wasn’t excitin’ any more, she said she’d have some posts set up so we could try goin’ between them at full speed, with only a few inches of leeway on each side. That was interestin’ for a while; but it soon got tame, and then’s when the great idea come in.

“‘What we ought to have,’ she said, ‘are

The Chauffeur

people to run out in front of us, so that we could see how to just graze them. That's the kind of practice we need most, and it would be nearly as thrilling as going through crowded streets where you might run over somebody every minute.'

"It was a lucky thing that Sadie Higgins, the maid, and Mr. Cavendish, the butler, had been sent out ahead to see that the house was put in order because she was goin' to let a couple of her friends that had just been married use it for their honeymoon. So she told me to go and get the stable hands and the housekeeper and Cavendish and Sadie and as many other people as I could find to come out and run across the track ahead of us every little while for me to see how near I could come to them without breakin' any bones or havin' to send for the doctor.

"Cavendish threw his head back and give me a look that made it so I could see my breath when I put the proposition up to him; but I knew if I let him bluff me then it would be all the harder for me to break him in when I got

Charles

to hangin' my clo's across a chair in the best room. So I give him a steel-blue glitter and said:

" ' Here, my buck, get a joint or two in your spine, and forget that you used to work for the nobility. The sooner you get used to takin' orders from me the easier it will be for you to get away when I say " go " later on.'

" He give a snort that nearly blew my hat off, and I made up my mind that if he was able to walk back after I got through practisin' with him at the track it would be by an act of Providence.

" It couldn't of been arranged better if the course had been made special for what Juliet wanted to do. There was plenty of sheds and trees scattered around for people to get behind so they could jump out in front of the car without us seein' them too soon to make it thrillin' and after we'd made the first round, knockin' down one of the horse-trainers and nearly killin' a stable boy the sweet little lady got so enthusiastic I was afraid she mightn't want to stop for meals.

The Chauffeur

“It was a grand sight to see the butler jump the first time I caught him out on the track. We had just turned into the stretch, and I was givin’ ’er all the speed we had when he walked out from behind a big chestnut tree as dignified as though he’d been goin’ down a church aisle. I pretended to lose control of the thing, and sent ’er wabblin’ at him, yellin’ for him to look out, and he got rattled, not knowin’ which way to go. While he was tryin’ to make up his mind I sent him over the fence head first, leavin’ one of his shoes in the road.

“Juliet looked back anxious, and when she seen him get up she clapped her hands and said it was the neatest bit of chawfing she ever seen.

“‘But be careful not to cripple him for life,’ she said. ‘I wouldn’t lose Cavendish for the world. Butlers are like poets. They have to be born that way, and the elements are so mixed up in Cavendish, that take him for all in all I shall not look upon his like again. He has been in the service of two barons and an earl. Dear old Alfred! If he had lived I



"When I Come to, Cavendish Was Holdin' the Maid in His Arms."

The Chauffeur

would never have had a chance to use this track for a game of this kind; but of course I don't mean that. There's the housekeeper climbing over the fence. Now do please be careful. She has two grandchildren that she's the only support of, and if anything should happen to her somebody might be appointed their guardian who wouldn't be fit for the place.'

"That's one of the lovely things about Juliet. She's always thinkin' about others and how to keep them out of trouble.

"The next time I went around I got most of the left leg of the butler's trousers, and that made the dear little woman so glad that she forgot herself and grabbed me by the arm. So we went against a shed that Miss Higgins was standin' behind, and when I come to, Cavendish, with one leg in burlap, was holdin' the maid in his arms, and her weepin' on his bosom.

"The other people had took Juliet to the house; but when I got there she was able to come out on the porch to see if I was all right.

" 'I could never forgive myself if your neck



"She Was Able to Come Out on the Porch."

The Chauffeur

had been broken,' she said. 'Do you think you will be well enough to practise some more to-morrow? It's almost as thrilling as really running over strangers.'

"The look she give me when I told her the time would never come when I wouldn't be ready to run over people to make her happy showed as plain as words that she was only waitin' and hopin'."

Charles

V

“GOIN’ home from the Pocahontas Club with Sadie, Mrs. Thurlow’s maid, I got a lot of infumation about high society,” said Charles, “which will make it easier for me to act natural when I get recognized in their set. Miss Higgins was to bring out a few trunks full of clo’s for her mistress, bein’ as she was to stay over for three or four days at the Billings’s cottage, and she got quite confidential with me, as we hummed along. It is strange how women are drew toward me. That’s the great misfortune of my life. It cuts from both ways. The men are always jealous and work against me, and I have to keep on guard all the time for fear the ladies will think I mean things when I’m only tryin’ to be kind.

“We hadn’t went a mile when Sadie commenced to tell me about things that had happened at the Chillingworths’ house party.

The Chauffeur

“ ‘They got up a game of bridge one night,’ she said, ‘and Mrs. Thurlow and Mrs. Chillingworth were playin’ against Bertie



“It’s Strange How Women Are Drew Towards Me.”

Flippendike and Mr. Chillingworth. Both sides kept about even for quite a while; but at last the women began to get ahead of the

Charles

game, and when it was time to settle, the men owed them seventeen dollars apiece. Then old Chillingworth said he'd pay Mrs. Thurlow an even twenty dollars if she'd throw in a kiss. I s'pose the punch must of been strong, or she wouldn't of done such a thing, or it might of been that she just wanted to teach him a lesson for makin' such a break.

“ ‘ Anyway, she said she'd agree if Mrs. Chillingworth would do the same with Bertie. They both said all right, and then Chillingworth got excited. Everybody knows how jealous he is, and they say she only married him to spite Bertie for givin' diamonds to an actress, any way ; but of course he couldn't go back on his own bargain and be a gentleman. Mrs. Thurlow says Bertie had probably kissed her dozens of times before she was married, or at least if he didn't he was as big a fool as she took him for, and as long as it was that way what difference would another one make just because she happened to be Chillingworth's wife.’ ”

“ ‘ Is kissin' as simple as all that? ’ says I,

The Chauffeur

wantin' to show Sadie I was interested. She was settin' kind of close to me, and we were buzzin' along a lonely part of the road with nobody in sight.

" 'You must know more about that than me, Mr. Charles,' she answered, smilin' beautiful, and kind of coaxin', too.

" 'Sadie ain't bad lookin' by a good deal, and you can see by her guessin' right off about me bein' persona my gracious with the ladies that she's as bright as a new lamp.

" 'What happened then?' says I, thinkin' it best to get her mind off me as soon as I could; but she looked so pitiful I felt mean. Dress her up in the things the ladies wear that get their pictures in the Sunday supplements, and she'd beat nine out of ten of 'em for looks, easy. She ain't exactly cultured, though, and culture's one of my favorite points. If she'd of had culture she'd of went ahead with her story and worked around to the kissin' question gradual again, without showin' right out plain that that's what she was thinkin' about. There's lots of things I'd

Charles

be willin' to overlook for the sake of culture, and probably that's why I've always had such a hankerin' for none but the best society.

"So I could see by the way she looked at me as we went along that she was mine if I wanted her. There's something about women's looks at a time like that which makes it as plain as though they spoke, 'specially when a man's had the experience I've had. And I can't bear to see a woman suffer. Thinkin' it would only be an act of kindness to let her down easy, I asked:

" 'What made you say that about me bein' up on the kissin' game? Of course I can't blame you for thinkin' a man that's had my chances in society would natchelly have a good deal of trouble not to get mixed up in love affairs of one kind and another; but I'm innocent. I never believe in breakin' a lady's heart just for practice.'

"She got off one of them sighs women are always ready to hand out when they think they have you comin'. I could see it was all in earnest with her, though, and bein' busy

The Chauffeur

thinkin' what a nice little wife she'd make for some good man without my fine tastes I didn't notice a boy that had run out in the road. We must of been goin' about a forty clip, and when we hit him he went up in the air like a bag of potatoes.

"At first I thought I'd go on, not knowin' how many men there might be in the house the kid run out of. Most people get so excited over such things that you never can tell what kind of trouble they'll make. I know several chawfers that have been mobbed by fools who lost their heads at times like that; but me havin' a heart that's as soft as a woman's and not knowin' what fear is, I stopped and we went back.

"When we got to the boy he was settin' beside the road, cryin', and Sadie had him in her arms in about a second, wipin' his tears away and lookin' so sweet and motherly I couldn't help likin' her. The little chap wasn't hurt a bit, so we left him when a couple of big fellows, one of them with red whiskers and a pitchfork, come runnin' down toward



"So Sweet and Motherly I Couldn't Help Likin' Her."

The Chauffeur

us. If the child had of been hurt I'd of stood by him, for there's nothin' walks on feet that I'm afraid of. But what's the use gettin' into a row with people that can't stop to reason, when it don't do any good? So we went on, and I couldn't seem to get the thought out of my mind how sweet Sadie looked with the little fellow's head pressed against her; and noticin' that she still had the same longin' expression in her eyes whenever I turned toward her, I says:

“ ‘Do you know what I was thinkin' when I seen you holdin' that kid in your arms? ’

“ ‘No,’ she says; ‘what? ’

“ ‘I was wishin' that if I ever had a child you'd be related to it.’

“I hadn't hardly any more than said it when we struck a stone and almost went over the high bank. But I never lose my head, no matter how fast they're comin'. I brought her back into the road all right, with Sadie holdin' onto my arm, and bumped a huckster's wagon into the ditch. He had a load of apples, so it probably didn't cost him anything, except to

Charles

get his wheel fixed ; for apples are things that don't break when you get them spilled.

" There's one fine thing about an automobile that people never think of, or at least I've never heard anybody mention it, and that is you can get so far away from the ones you run over before they catch their breath again that what they say don't shock the ladies you've got with you.

" After we had went about half a mile further, Sadie leaned back, lookin' hurt.

" ' Here,' says I to myself, ' what's the use makin' this poor girl hope, only to find out at the bitter end that it can never be? '

" Sometimes a person has to be cruel to be kind. So I thought I'd give her a hint or two, and she'd know by that that she might as well look for somebody in her own sphere of life.

" ' Miss Higgins,' says I, ' I want to tell you something. There's a lady that I think a great deal of.'

" She kind of drew back like a catamount gettin' ready to jump on its prey, and I hurried up to say :

The Chauffeur

“ ‘ She’s fur above me now ; but if I know anything about a woman’s heart she’s only waitin’ for a chance to tell me she’ll be mine. Love can’t hide under a cold formality, as Albert Springer, my old school-teacher, used to say, nor little things like different standin’ in society. She has luxuries in the fine mansion, and I have a room in the stable ; but when we sit here side by side what difference does that make? ’

“ With that she give a little squeal, and blamed if she didn’t throw her arms around my neck, sayin’ it come to her as a complete surprise, and for me not to mind her bein’ so much above me. She said she’d be willin’ to put anything aside for love and let me in by the kitchen door that evening so we could talk it over and fix the happy day.

“ You can imagine my feelin’s and her probably achin’ for a chance to tell Juliet the glad news. Women are such fools about them kind of things. But I couldn’t get out of it without mebbly wreckin’ her poor young life right there, so I made up my mind to explain about

Charles

it to Juliet myself, before Sadie got a chance, if I could, and ask her to be mine at the same time.



"Then I Seen It Was One of the Housemaids."

"When it got dark I heard coughin' at the kitchen door; and I knew I had to do some-

The Chauffeur

thing, so I went up to the corner of the house and said: 'Is that you?'

" 'Yes,' says she.

" 'I'm sorry I can't come,' says I, 'I've just got word from my Uncle John that I haven't seen for seven years that he's comin' up.'

" 'Who asked you to come?' she says; and then I seen it was one of the housemaids.

" Somehow, I feel as though something was about to happen to me that might affect my whole life."



"I Seen There Was Something on Her Mind."

The Chauffeur

VI

“THE day after Mrs. Thurlow’s maid took me by surprise and told me, without my knowledge or consent, that she was mine,” said Charles, “I took Juliet out for a thirty-five mile whizz in the Rumbler. I seen before we had went far that there seemed to be something on her mind.

“It struck me all of a sudden that Sadie had been tellin’ her about us bein’ engaged. So I thought I’d better let her know the truth right off. But it’s mighty hard to tell a woman like Juliet that she’s the idol of your heart, without workin’ up to it gradual.

“‘Ain’t you feelin’ well this mornin’?’” says I.

“‘Why do you ask that?’ she answered.

“‘Oh, nothin’ much,’ says I, pretendin’ to be disconcerted, ‘only I thought you looked kind of sad.’

“‘I was thinkin’ of Alfred,’ she says.

Charles

“ Confound Alfred! The only good thing I can see about him is the money he left her. I wish she'd cut him out.

“ ‘ I was thinking of Alfred,’ she says, ‘ because I never can come this way without remembering the time he and I came out here, one day, and something happened to the gear-in’. He got under the car, and was layin’ on his back tryin’ to fix things, when all of a sudden it started and ran into that yard over there, draggin’ him along. It’s hard to tell what would of happened if it hadn’t bumped against an apple-tree. He had hardly anything on but his underclothes when we got him out, and it was weeks before I could coax him to try it again. Poor boy! There was many good things about him; but he wasn’t a sportsman at heart. He could be satisfied with the fewest thrills of almost anyone I ever knew.

“ ‘ That’s one good point about you, Charles. How happy I would of been if Alfred had enjoyed takin’ chances as you do. There comes a team. See if you can’t make

The Chauffeur

it run away. I feel so depressed to-day that I must have excitement of some kind or I don't know what I'll do.'

"The team was trottin' along toward us, with a farmer and his wife in a spring wagon, and I commenced to toot and zigzag across the road, makin' as much of a racket as I could, and when the horses tried to climb on top of one another I give her a sudden shoot right at them. It worked munificent. They whirled around, upsettin' the wagon, and then got off. It was about the finest runaway I ever seen. Juliet clapped her hands, and the beautiful color come back to her cheeks in a hurry.

"The farmer's wife had one arm hurt pretty bad, and he had a cut on the head, but it didn't amount to much, and after settlin' with them we went on.

"Seein' the dear lady happy again, I thought it would be a good time to tell her the truth about me and Sadie. Never make love to a woman when she's thinkin' about something else, or has the blues. That's one reason

Charles

why so many people go through life disappointed. Gettin' a woman to give her promise is like gettin' a job. You've got to take her when things are favorable.

"Go into a man's office when he's feelin' grumpy and tell him you're lookin' for a place, and he'll probably tell you there's nothin' doin'. The time to catch him is when he's got his feet up on the desk and thinks they can't stop him. He'll want to hire you then, just to show that he's spreadin' out and needs more people. It's like Albert Springer, my old school-teacher, used to say. Catch a thing at the right minute and it's a case of come, birdie, come.

"So I looked over at Juliet as she sat alongside of me, and gave a sigh, throwin' my whole soul into my eyes. I s'pose she didn't notice it through the goggles, or mebbby she only pretended she didn't, havin' that scared sort of a feelin' that comes to a person when they realize that Fate has her finger on the button. At least she spoke about a peacock that was standin' on a fence not far off,

The Chauffeur

hollerin' for love or rain or something. If it was rain the bird wanted it got it good and plenty. We hadn't went more than a mile or two further before they was a regular cloud-bust.



"Have You Noticed Anything Strange About Me?"

"By good luck we'd just reached a cross-roads church with a shed for horses behind it, and I run in there to wait till the storm was over. As we got under, the spill commenced. Then I took off the goggles so I could give

Charles

both my face and soul a fair show, and turned around toward her.

“ ‘ Mrs. Thurlow,’ says I, ‘ there’s something I want to tell you. Have you noticed anything strange about me? ’

“ ‘ Yes,’ she answered, not trustin’ herself to look me in the eyes. ‘ I think I have. I believe you’re in love.’

“ You can imagine how my heart jumped. I didn’t expect she was goin’ to lead right off without fiddlin’ for an openin’ a while first.

“ ‘ I didn’t intend to tell you about it so soon,’ says I; ‘ but something has happened that makes me want you to know the truth now. There’s only one lady in the world that can ever make me think it’s worth while stayin’ alive. But I’m in a horrible fix. There’s another one that loves me and thinks I’m goin’ to take her for everlastin’.’

“ ‘ Oh, you men, you men!’ she said. ‘ Why are you always breakin’ poor, trustin’ girls’ hearts? ’

“ ‘ But it ain’t my fault,’ I told her. ‘ Is a man to blame when a woman falls in love with



“‘Oh, You Men! Why Are You Always Breakin’ Girls’ Hearts?’”

Charles

him just because he tries to treat her kind? You couldn't expect us men to go around tellin' the girls we never could learn to love; that they needn't hope before they started to do it; could you? '

" ' No,' she said; ' that would hardly be the right thing for you to do; but you might at least give us poor women some sign that we could understand before it is too late. Do you think the one that must lose you will take it very hard? '

" ' Well,' says I, ' you ought to know more about that than me. How would you take it if you was in her place? '

" ' You can't expect me to confess how a girl that has loved and lost feels,' she says, turnin' her face away.

" ' I didn't mean that. I know such a thing could never happen to you, only I thought you ought to know more about a woman's heart than me. But the trouble is, how can I break it to her without wreckin' her life? '

" ' Is she very young? '

" Up to the time she said that I'd suspi-

The Chauffeur

cioned Sadie had told her all about it. That showed she didn't know the truth.

“ ‘She's about as old as you are, I should think,’ says I; ‘but the thing that bothers me the most is whether she could sue me for breach of promise if I didn't get out of it with her before the other one knows that her and me was meant for each other.’

“ ‘But you have let the other one know,’ she says, givin' me a kind of a sad smile that would of made me jump over where she was and grab her in my arms if it hadn't been that a man with a buggy had drove in at the other end of the shed and was lookin' at us.

“ ‘Yes,’ I told her, ‘I know I have. What do you think I'd better do?’

“ ‘You must go to the other girl and let her know the truth. I couldn't forgive you, Charles, if you didn't do that much, at least. Go to her and tell her all, before you go any further with the one you love. I insist on that. You must have given her some reason to think you cared for her or you wouldn't be worried about it.’

Charles

“ ‘ I s’pose I did; but I didn’t mean it, or at least it was only because I had a kind of a feelin’ of tenderness toward her just for a minute or so.’

“ ‘ What did you say to her, Charles?’

“ ‘ It wasn’t much. I only told her that if I ever had any children I’d be glad if she was related to them.’

“ It must of touched her to the heart. She turned her face away and seemed to be sobbin’ or something, and bein’ that it had quit rainin’ by that time we backed out and started for home. It was a dull trip. On account of the bad road I could hardly get a chance to look around at Juliet, and we only run over a shote and a couple of ducks and crippled a push-cart man, so I’m afraid it was kind of depressin’ for her.

“ I wish I was through breakin’ the sad news to Sadie. Havin’ two women in love with you at once, and each thinkin’ life will be a dreary waste for you if she don’t consent to be yours is worse than tryin’ to ride a bicycle and lead a cow.”

The Chauffeur

VII

"I HAVEN'T had a chance yet," said Charles, "to break the news to Sadie that it ain't her soul and mine that's beatin' as one. It worries me to think what she'll do when the blow falls. If I could only do something to make her give up thinkin' of me as a hero before I have to let her know the truth it would be some relief. Then I could go to her with an easy conscience and tell her to try to love another. But the great trouble with me is I can't help doin' noble things and bein' the women's idle. Nearly every time I go out I do something that if I didn't hate to tell people about myself would bring me a Carnegie medal.

"Yesterday mornin' Mrs. Thurlow told me to bring the Rumbler around for a hundred-mile trip. It was a munificent day, and Juliet seemed to be as glad as a girl who had

Charles

just been introduced to a count that needs the money. We stopped at the Pocahontas Club to get Bertie Flippendike. It was easy enough to see why she wanted him along. She was afraid she might forget herself if somebody else wasn't there, and promise to be mine before I was free from Sadie. If she done that I s'pose she would always have it on her conscience, 'specially if the other girl got to droopin' and died when she found it out. The dear little lady has such a kind heart that she'd probably suffer and wait for weeks before comin' right out and tellin' me I was her infinity, if she seen that somebody else thought the same thing and had to have time to get over it gradual.'

"It's a tough thing to have to go to bed at night knowin' somebody is dyin' for your love and there ain't no help for them. After this I'll always have a tender feelin' for Sadie Higgins on account of the sufferin' she'll have to do when she gives me up. When me and Juliet gets to usin' the same hair-brush I'm goin' to make Cavendish the butler ask Sadie to marry

The Chauffeur

him just for her satisfaction, or hunt another job.

“After we left the club, with Bertie settin’ in the tonneau beside Juliet, I thought it might be a good plan to make things so interestin’ that he wouldn’t have time to do any soulful gazin’—not that I think she’d care for him if there was only one four cylinder car on earth and he owned it. We started up the Chester road just as the fast express was pullin’ out across the valley. After we’d made about five miles the train must have had a hot-box or a break-down of some kind. We dropped it out of sight behind us, anyway, and I had Bertie hangin’ on with both hands and gettin’ up, ready to jump when we went around curves. I could see that he was thinkin’ of home and mother, and it wasn’t very hard to guess what Juliet thought of him, her bein’ one of the gamest ladies that ever run over a goose.

“When I pulled up to about twenty miles an hour goin’ through a town where I knew they’d have a bunch of deputies out holdin’

Charles

watches on us, she wanted to know why I was goin' so slow.

" ' You don't call this slow, do you? ' says Bertie, as we swung around a corner on the two outside wheels and knocked a butcher's cart with a boy in it into somebody or other's garden.

" As we went around the next corner we could see a crowd that seemed to be excited back where we'd struck the cart.

" ' I don't see why people are so careless,' Juliet said.

" ' But it wasn't the boy's fault,' Bertie answered.

" ' I know. They ought to build their fences stronger and higher if they want to save their gardens,' she said.

" It seems they telephoned ahead to stop us, and five or six men and some boys run out in the road, swingin' their arms and hollerin'. When we got within about a hundred yards of them I put on all the speed we had and picked out the place where we would have to run over the fewest of them to get through. They

The Chauffeur

never budged; but kept on motionin' at us to stop.

"I could begin to feel my hair stickin' up straight, and got ready to put on the brake, although I wouldn't want Juliet to suspicion it for a minute, because I know she'd never think of me as a real sportsman again if she knew the truth. Suddenly the people in front of us quit hollerin' or movin'. They were scared stiff, seein' that I couldn't be bluffed. I couldn't of stopped in time then if I'd wanted to. Right in front was an old man with spectacles on, and some way I got to thinkin' about the way the family would keep the glasses after the funeral to remember him by. He made me think of Dave Griswold, who used to play the alto horn in the brass band down where I come from, and it must of been thinkin' of the horn that made me remember the tooter. I let off a couple of quick, sassy ones, and them people scattered like frogs gettin' off of a plank when you throw a rock among 'em.

"It only shows there's some truth in what



"A Cross-Eyed Man Had a Watch Pulled on Us."

The Chauffeur

I heard a man sayin' at the garage the other day that one toot on the tooter makes the whole world skin, or something like that.

"After we got through the town Juliet wanted to run the machine awhile. She said she was goin' to show Bertie how she could handle the wheel; but of course that was only a blind. She wanted to set beside me. Bertie dug several pebbles out of his ears while I was helpin' the lady to change seats, and then we started on again. Before long we commenced to get into another town, and passed a cross-eyed man who had a watch pulled on us; but seemed to be lookin' at something off in another direction so we couldn't be blamed for not easin' up and askin' him about it. Bertie seemed to have his nerve by that time, and threw a kiss at him as we zipped past.

"A little further along was another time-keeper, and Bertie asked him how he liked us, and I motioned him to come and get in. Suddenly Juliet give a scream. A little ways ahead of us was a rope stretched across the road between two trees. A lot of men and boys



"A Little Further Along Was Another Timekeeper."

The Chauffeur

and a couple of dogs were settin' around on each side waitin' for us, so it was up to me to perform lively. I had hold of the wheel in



"One Big Chap With a Star on Tellin' Us We Was All Under Arrest."

less than a second, and we stopped about three inches from the rope.

"The two crowds started for us together, one big chap with a star on tellin' us we was all under arrest.

Charles

“ ‘We are, are we?’ says I, reversin’ and backin’ into one gang and then puttin’ on full speed ahead at the others, while Bertie stood up and fought off a couple of fellows that tried to climb in behind. I butted the man with the star, and he fell over one of the dogs. That brought the other dog around, and he grabbed the constable by the leg. While his friends were tryin’ to get him loose I turned the car and we’d of been all right then, only the timekeeper we’d passed just before gettin’ to the rope had another one stretched across the road, and there we were between the two of them.

“ Juliet looked at me as though she knew I’d get out some way and asked:

“ ‘Oh, Charles, what are we going to do now? I don’t mind paying a fine; but it would humiliate me awful if I had to think we let these plain people trap us.’

“ ‘Trust in me,’ says I, thinkin’ to myself: ‘Charles, are you goin’ to let yourself be took in by a man that probably don’t know the difference between a radiator and a headlight,

The Chauffeur

or are you goin' to rise phoenix-like to the occasion?' as my old school-teacher, Albert Springer, would say.

"The two ropes were stretched about a half a mile apart, and I put on all the speed we had, for the crowd of farmers with the dogs was comin' after us.

" 'Here,' I says to Bertie, when we'd got almost to the second rope, 'you loosen one end of it, while I'm keepin' the other fellow citizen busy.'

" 'That's a fine idea,' Juliet said, givin' me a smile and the monkey-wrench, 'only hurry or we'll be caught from behind. Don't be too reckless with him, Charles. He may be raising a family. Always remember that a man who is raising a family can hardly be blamed for most of the other things he does.'

"I tossed Mr. Man up and down a few times, and hummed 'Rock-a-by Baby in the Tree-top' to him; for as I had nothin' agin him personally there was no sense in disablin' him. The crowd with the dogs was comin' pretty fast, so as soon as I seen that Bertie

Charles

had the knot loose I made a quick landin' beside Juliet and started ahead. Bertie caught on as we went through, and I s'posed he would climb in; but it seems he didn't.

"We turned down the first cross-road, and got away in fine style. When me and Juliet had time to look around all we seen of Bertie was the tips of his fingers over the edge of the tonneau. I stopped, and Juliet asked:

" 'Bertie, what in the world are you doin'?' "

" 'Dyin',' he answered, kind of choky.

" 'You poor man,' she says, 'I'll come and help you in the car.'

" 'Don't!' he yelled. 'Don't you come back here for anything!'

" 'I will, too,' she says, startin' to get out.

" 'Charles,' says Bertie, who was standin' up by that time so we could see his head and shoulders, 'hold her there. Don't you let her come back here.'

" 'I believe the poor boy's lost his wits,' she says, lookin' worried.

" 'No,' says Bertie, "it's not my wits. A fellow can get dragged a mile or two without

The Chauffeur

losin' his wits; but it's different with his trousers.'

"After I'd took Juliet's leather coat back and wound him up in it he got in the car and



"Charles, Don't You Let Her Come Back Here!"

we went home. The dear lady says it was one of the pleasantest trips she ever had; but there's one thing that troubles me very much. She's got an idea that Bertie acted heroic and showed signs of bein' a true sportsman. She

Charles

can't keep from talkin' about him, and wants all that was left of his trousers to keep for a sophomore, or relic, or whatever they call it.

"The next time we take Bertie out in the Rumbler I'm goin' to lose him where he'll never find his way back."

The Chauffeur

VIII

"A HIGH honor has come to me," said Charles. "Last night there was a meetin' of gents that chawf, in my room, which is a beautiful spot. Mrs. Thurlow has saw to it that I have the best goin'. Last week she give me a book about the rules of bridge, and a lot of magazines with pictures of actresses, because she prob'ly wants me to read up so I can talk as though I was always used to it, when she takes me in society. One day when she was out to see the gardener's little girl that had the whoopin' cough she come to my room to find out if I was comfortable.

"'Charles,' says the dear little lady, 'I want you to have everything just as nice as though you lived in the house. If there's anything you want, be sure to let me know about it.'

"I thought I would tell her if I had a picture of her to hang on the wall where I could see it the first thing when I woke up in

Charles

the mornin' it would make things easier for me to wait for the time when I will have the right to hang my extra pants up in her closet; but we got to talkin' about something else, and it passed out of my mind. Just before she was leavin' she said:

“ ‘ Charles, you must have a private bath.’

“ ‘ That’s the only kind I ever take,’ says I, wonderin’ whatever made her think I’d get out before people and have one.

“ The next day the plumbers come around and put in a munificent white tub. I s’pose she wants me to get used to it before I get to be the head of the house, because they say people in society often take one or two a week, just to keep the hot water from goin’ to waste.

“ About twenty of the gentlemen that’s professionals come in to form a club, last night, and Mr. Sniggs, who is chawfing for the Billingses and used to belong to a machinists’ union, sajested about havin’ a constitution. I will read it to you:

“ ‘ *Article I.* The name of this club shall be the Chawfers’ Club.

The Chauffeur

“ ‘ *Art. II.* No chawfer shall be admitted who ain’t been run in for goin’ too fast, or has any respects for the laws regulatin’ speed when the police ain’t watchin’.

“ ‘ *Art. III.* It shall be the duty of members of this club to always come as near runnin’ over children as they can without cripplin’ them permanent; so their parents will keep them out of the streets.

“ ‘ *Art. IV.* Any member of this club that ever stops or goes back after knockin’ a buggy in the ditch shall be expelled.

“ ‘ *Art. V.* Members of this club, when meetin’ other members in automobiles, shall keep to the right. When meetin’ anything besides autos they shall take the middle of the road, if they can’t take it all.

“ ‘ *Art. VI.* Chawfers who stop or slow up to let scared horses past shall be blackballed.

“ ‘ *Art. VII.* It is the duty of members of this club to make it as uncomfortable and dangerous as they can for everything besides automobiles to use the public highways.

“ ‘ *Art. VIII.* No member of this club

Charles

shall chawf for anybody that wants him to milk a cow, the same bein' unprofessional.'

"I was elected President, Mr. Tomlinson, who is chawfin' for old Waterbury, the banker, makin' a fine speech about me, sayin' I stopped for nothin', from a baby carriage to a landslide. The race for Vice-President was a close one between Mr. Buckley and Mr. Burrridge. Mr. Buckley's friends claimed he ought to have the honor because one time he tried to run through a train of cars; but Mr. Burrridge was elected on the grounds of havin' been arrested more times than anybody else in the room for goin' faster than the law allowed.

"We had a lively debate about chawfers bein' arrested in place of the people they're chawfin' for. Tomlinson started it.

"'It don't look fair to me,' he says, 'for us boys to be the ones that have to stand the disgrace of gettin' hauled into police-stations when there's trouble, while all the rich people that want us to break records and things have to do is to go our bail and pay the fines. Here's me, that's a second cousin to a State



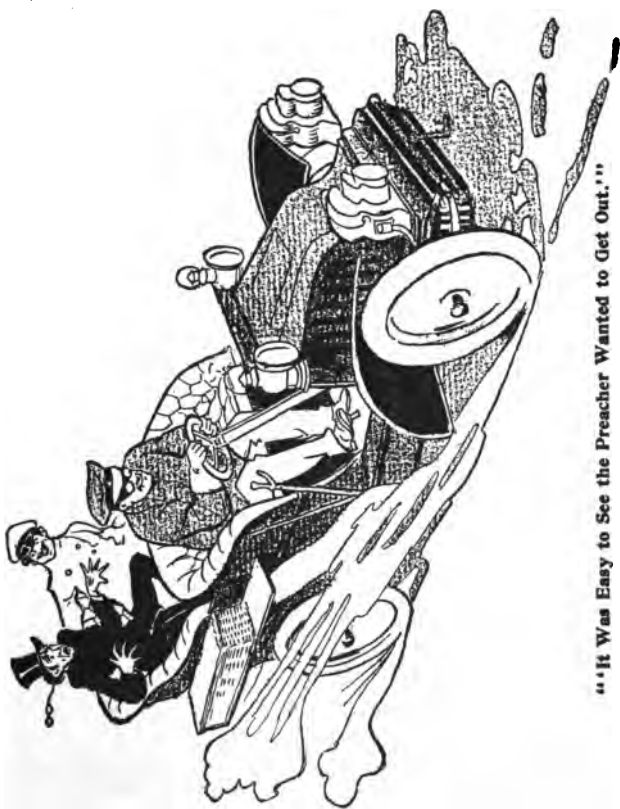
" Mr. Tomlinson Makin' a Speech About Me."

Charles

Senator, bein' pinched for tippin' over a pony cart with an old lady and two children in it. How did it happen? The old man I work for had the preacher up from the little town he lives in when he goes to swear off his taxes, and he says to me:

“ ‘ Now, Tom ’—he always calls me that, I s'pose to show we're on familiar terms—“ Now, Tom,” he says, when him and the preacher got in the tonneau, “ I want you to show Dr. Spuddsleigh what you can do with this thing.”

“ ‘ We started up town, and I was takin' them along through the crowd at a nice easy clip of about fifteen miles an hour, dodgin' the hacks and makin' the people at the crossin's look mad. The preacher was breathin' hard and keepin' ready to jump any minute, and the old man might of been satisfied, at least till we got out where there was more room; but he wanted to show off. He asked me why I didn't go ahead, and leaned back, with a tired look, as though he was wastin' time by not gettin' out and walkin'. So I pushed ahead



“It Was Easy to See the Preacher Wanted to Get Out.”

Charles

lively, and when we'd got to goin' about twenty-five miles an hour he said that was more like it.

“ ‘It was easy to see the preacher wanted to get out; but not bein’ one of them kind of people that can lie about things, believin’ everything’s fair in business and diplomussy, as long as it gives you the advantage, he couldn’t cook up a good excuse. “Waterbury,” I heard him sayin’ every little while, “if you’ll have your man stop I’ll get out and walk. I can find my way back alone.” “Pshaw,” says the old man, “there’s no more danger here than swingin’ in a hammock. Tomlinson can handle this thing as easy as a bank cashier can juggle with books.”

“ ‘We swung around the electrics and cut in ahead of carriages and trucks and scared the push-cart men up onto the curb, and I tooted at women, makin’ them run back to the sidewalks, without seemin’ to care a rap how they held their skirts. Dr. Spuddsleigh was holdin’ on his silk hat with one hand and hangin’ to the seat with the other, and he had



“‘I Think He Was Praying.’”

Charles

his eyes shut. I think he was prayin', although it might be that he was wishin' me and the old man and the auto was in Jerico, skip-pin' from rock to rock.

" 'I could see the boss was tickled, although I didn't have much time to look around. We'd got out to where it was beginnin' to be easy to get through, and he says:

" " "Now, Tom, let's see if there's any speed in this machine."

" " "Hold on," says the preacher, kind of pleadin', and not seemin' to get his breath very easy, "I can't stand this. I've got a weak heart. If you'll let me out, I'll take a street-car back. I want to find out something about your street-car system, anyway, to use in a sermon, and I'd like to be here to sophisticate at your funeral, if anything happens."

" " "Never mind, Tom," says the old man, "speed 'er up. The doctor always did like to have his joke."

" "It was about three-quarters of a second after that when the pony cart I spoke about came around the corner, and a cross-town

The Chauffeur

street-car butted in from the other side. I seen that I'd either have to hit the car or the cart, and not wantin' to damage any more property than I could help I took the safe side. We might of went on without waitin' for the cart and them in it to come down after we'd hit them, only the car got in front of us, and we had to stop. That's a disagreeable thing about accidents. You never can tell just how they're goin' to happen.

“ ‘ Well, the police clubbed back the mob, and was goin' to pinch all three of us ; but the old man argued them out of it by wantin' to know if they would of arrested the passengers if it had been the street-car that run into the pony cart. So they nabbed me, and after I'd been in a cell two hours he sent his secretary around to furnish bail.

“ ‘ It ain't a square deal. Whenever there's accidents the chawfers are the ones that gets run in. As long as there ain't anything but fines to be paid I s'pose we can stand it to let them furnish the money, although if any of us ever come out to run for Congress or Gover-

Charles

nor think how it would hurt us to have the papers print the records showin' we'd been in jail. But the worst of it is that if there was any hangin' to be done they'd want us to go ahead and be the victims; and I'm blamed if I'll do that for anybody, even if they have a sixty-horse-power machine or offer to raise my salary for it.'

"Several of the boys wanted it put in the constitution of the club that we wouldn't stand for arrests where the bosses was to blame, but I come out strong on the other side, and got them to let it drop. It's all right for fellers that ain't chawfin' for ladies as beautiful as Juliet to kick, and anyway when her and me are bone of one bone and flesh of one flesh, as my old school-master, Albert Springer, used to say, it'll come in handy for us to have a chawfer who's willin' to get scolded by the Judge as long as we pay the costs.

"My motto is: 'Don't ever be too rough on society; for you never can tell how soon you'll be in society yourself.'"

The Chauffeur

IX

“ONE time,” said Charles, “I was at a circus where they had what they called a happy family. There was a bear and a wolf and a pig and a dog or two, and I don’t know but a porkypine, all in one cage.

“I s’pose it took a smart man to train all them animals to dwell in peace and harminosity together; but that wasn’t anything to what it would be to fix it so one man and two women that loved him could eat at the same table and have a taste for their meals.

“The other day Mrs. Thurlow thought it would be a good thing to practise a little for our big automobile trip by takin’ about a two days’ run through the country. I was in hopes when she spoke about it that her and me would go alone, with nothin’ but our happy thoughts and all as merry as a marriage bell, as Albert Springer used to say; but you can

Charles

imagine my feelin's when I found out that her maid was to go with us.

"I'd managed not to get around where Sadie was after she made the mistake of thinkin' I loved her, and proposed to me, and I wouldn't wonder if she's been worryin' about me a good deal. She sent word one day that she wanted to see me; but I kept out of her way, thinkin' it would be best not to let her know the sad truth too sudden.

"When her and Juliet come out to get in the auto the mornin' we started on our trip I could tell by the way she looked at me that there would be something doin' before we got back unless luck was on my side. Nothin' happened all day, except once when a toll-gate-keeper pulled his pole down sudden; but the post it was fastened to happened to be rotten, so we knocked it off and got away without any damage. I could seem to feel a warm place on the back of my neck where Sadie was lookin', although I pretended to be so busy watchin' out for things that I hadn't time to look around.

The Chauffeur

“Along toward dark we struck a lonely place where it didn’t seem as though there was a house or a constable within forty miles. The woods had been cleared off once; but they was growin’ up on both sides of the road again, and it give a person a homesick feelin’ to hear the whippoorwills. It would of been a munificent place to find out how fast the Rumbler could of went if it hadn’t been for the sand. But that’s always the way in life. When you find the right thing it’s a cinch that it’ll be in the wrong place. When you can think of elegant things to say to the woman you love she ain’t there, and when you put on a pair of shoes that don’t hurt your feet they ain’t neat-lookin’.

“If the road at the place I was speakin’ about had been good and hard and smooth I’ll bet there’d of been at least fourteen rigs of one kind and another comin’ toward us and somebody with a stop-watch every thirty yards.

“The sand kept gettin’ deeper and deeper, and the machine acted tired. Every little

Charles

while a cat-bird would give a kind of a sad squeak from some bush, as though it had something disagreeable on its mind, or didn't want to seem too cheerful for fear of makin' us jealous. I wouldn't of cared if Sadie hadn't been there. It was the kind of a place I would of picked out for a break-down if Juliet and me had been alone. It was as good as a desert island in one way, and better in another. Desert islands is all right for a man and a woman that love one another to get cast away on, as long as they ain't hungry; but give me a place that you can wade out of after you begin to get so busy thinkin' about a sandwich that you kind of forget that the lady's an angel. But there was Sadie thinkin' her and me had two souls with a single beat, so I wasn't hankerin' to camp out in no lonely spot just then.

"The dew made the steerin'-wheel damp and sticky, and we got to goin' so slow before long that we could smell our own gasoline. When that happens it ain't any fun automobilin'. The great charm about an auto, as

The Chauffeur

Juliet said one day, is to let other people inhale your fragrance as you pass.

“There wasn’t any chance to knock down a fence and go through a cornfield, because the brush was thick on both sides of us and we couldn’t of turned around if we’d wanted to. Still, we’d of prob’ly made good at that if the chain hadn’t broke.

“‘What are you going to do now, Charles?’ Juliet asked, sort of anxious, while Sadie was lookin’ on seemin’ nervous-like.

“‘I’m goin’ to do the same thing you’re doin’,’ says I, ‘and if you feel as though it would do more good to say it out loud, don’t mind me.’

“‘But it’s getting dark,’ she says.

“‘I can cuss just as hard in the dark as any other time,’ I answered.

“‘Charles,’ said Sadie, ‘I forbid you to talk that way to Mrs. Thurlow.’

“‘Never mind,’ Juliet replied; ‘I know just how poor Charles feels. The question is: What’s to be done?’

“I got under to see if I could do anything;

Charles

but there was no hope. While I was layin' there on my back, with the sand workin' down my neck and the grease tricklin' along toward my elbows, Juliet sat down between the wheels and made remarks about people who didn't know enough to get up chainless automobiles that I'd hate to have her say about me.

"I was crawlin' out beside her when a bug of some kind come boomin' along and hit her on her soft, beautiful neck. She give a little scream and caught me by one ear, hangin' on as though she thought there must be some kind of a charm about it. I reached up and took her little hand, which felt like a piece of angel cake bein' sticky I s'pose because she'd been holdin' the monkey-wrench, and when I helped her to her feet it was as dark as the inside of a coal-mine, except for the streaks from our headlights, and we could begin to hear thunder away off west.

" 'I know what I'll do,' says I. 'I'll walk up the road a ways and see if I can make out a light anywhere.'

" 'You sha'n't do anything of the kind,'

The Chauffeur

Sadie answered. 'What would become of me if something happened to you, away off there alone in the dark?'

"A brilliant idea come to me then.

"'What's the matter,' I says to myself, 'with takin' Sadie out there a mile or so and losin' her in the woods?'

"But the trouble was to get Juliet to stay in the car alone. Before I had a chance to speak about it Mrs. Thurlow said we'd all go, so she took hold of one of my arms, and Sadie got on the other side of me. We hadn't went fur before Sadie commenced squeezin' my hand and pressin' as close to me as she could. I felt sorry for the poor girl; but I'd of give all the money I ever expect any of my relations to leave me if she'd of been at home right then, listenin' to Cavendish the butler tellin' about when he buttled for the nobility.

"We went about half a mile, and it was so dark that if Rockefeller's bank account had been piled up seven inches away we couldn't of saw it.

"'Let's go back,' Juliet said when there

Charles

was a bright flash of lightnin' and the thunder sounded as though the storm was gettin' pretty close. 'Nobody seems to live around here, and I can't blame them. If only poor, dear Alfred could be here I wouldn't mind it so much. He was such a handy man in the dark.'

"'Don't be afraid,' says I. 'If there's anything in these woods that eats people it'll have to fill up on me first.'

"'Charles,' she says, holdin' my arm a little tighter, 'don't talk that way. You make me feel nervous.'

"'They say there's wildcats up this way,' I told her, gettin' ready to hold her close to me; but Sadie give a yell and flopped down in the road, claimin' she'd turned her ankle and couldn't walk. We helped her up and I had to carry her back to the automobile. If she ever gets married and the man has any doubts before the weddin' about whether she's as plump as she looks I can make him rest easy. If there's any of her that didn't grow there she uses mighty heavy stuff for paddin'. That's all I've got to say about it. She called

The Chauffeur

me 'dear' out loud twice while I was staggerin' through the sand with her; but I turned it off by tellin' Juliet she must be out of her mind on account of the pain.



"The Ladies Grabbed Me Around the Neck."

"I got her piled in the car, and was puttin' up the curtains when it started to rain. After we'd got as wet as if we'd been actin' in a tank-

Charles

show, it cleared off, and about midnight Juliet went to sleep, with me sittin' between them. Sadie had been tryin' to get me to put my arm around her; but finally got mad and leaned the other way, and I was about asleep myself when something give a nasty growl right under us. The ladies was frightened, and both yelled at once and grabbed me around the neck. You can imagine what kind of a fight I'd of been able to put up against a wild beast; with them kind of circumstances goin' on. But after another growl or two the thing underneath commenced to bark, and we knew it was a dog.

"I was tryin' to get friendly with him by callin' him Tige, when there was a crashin' through the brush, and somebody hollered 'Hello!' I put my head out, and the moon had come up enough so I could see two men with guns.

" 'What's the matter?' one of 'em asked. 'Break-down?'

" 'No,' says I, 'me and six other detectives in here are lookin' for a man that escaped from



"I Could See Two Men With Guns."

Charles

the penitentiary night before last and is hidin' up this way somewhere. What are you doin' with them guns? It looks suspicious.'

"They claimed they were huntin' coons, and went on up the road. After they'd got away Juliet said:

" 'Charles, you are the cleverest man I ever saw. Please get out on the front seat and keep watch. I must get a few hours' sleep or I'll look like a fright to-morrow.'

"I always hate to tell what ain't so; but my motto is nothin's a sin that you have to do to save a lady's good name.

"In the mornin' I found a blacksmith's shop about a mile and a half up the road, and we got back home late in the afternoon, with Sadie's ankle as well as ever. When she run up the steps Juliet looked at me and told me I was a regular knight, smilin' so sweet my heart almost got bruised on my back teeth.

" 'Charles,' she says, kind of pleadin', 'you'll not get married and leave me, will you?'

" 'Leave you?' says I. 'It wouldn't be

The Chauffeur

any use of gettin' married if I was goin' to leave you, would it? '

" ' I'm so glad you look at it that way,' she says; ' only you're so splendid almost anybody would be glad to get you. Now go and have a good rest, for I'm to take Lord Fourflush out to-morrow, and I want you to be at your best.'

" It was great to hear her come right out and own up like that; but, confound it! I can't see why she wants a Lord around when it's all settled between her and me."

Charles

X

"If Old Nick had a title," said Charles, "all the angels would be wearin' pants. The women would all go to the bad place. A woman will give up her parents for the man she loves. After that she'll give up the man for her children. Then she'll give up the children for a title if she gets a chance.

"I thought Juliet had too much sense, even though she's rich and a beauty, to let the title bug get in under her leather cap; but after all I don't know as I'd feel safe around her if she didn't act a little crazy over Lord Four-flush. It would make me think she couldn't hardly be a real flesh-and-blood woman if she turned him down because he had bow legs and the top of his head only came up to my chin. There would be something uncanny about a lady that didn't get dotty over a Lord, even if she knew he got raised to the peerage for



**"They Say Lord Flossie Come Over to Look at the
Gallivant Girls."**

Charles

writin' a poem about the Queen's pet pup or inventin' a new kind of a sauce.

" They say Lord Flossie come over to look at the Gallivant girls. Mrs. Pickleham, their aunt, got her London agent to find him for her when she was in Europe, and she brought him back with her. Not havin' any daughters of her own, the only way she seen to get related to the nobility was by makin' good with her nieces. She'd got it all fixed up between them and Grace Gallivant, and they say old man Gallivant went down to the bank to draw five thousand dollars for bindin' the bargain, when Lord Flossie seen Juliet. The minute he set eyes on her he sent word to the Gallivants that he raised his price four million dollars.

" The first time we was to take him out in our auto Juliet says to me: ' Charles, I want you to be extra careful to-day, because his lordship has trouble with his nervous system, and a sudden shock might be bad. Don't run over anybody. Some people have to get used to such things by degrees, and be sure every-

The Chauffeur

thing is all right before we start. Do you think you would like to go to England to chawf around an ancestral seat?’

“I told her I’d promised my grandmother on her death-bed I’d never leave my native land, and I didn’t go much on ancestral seats, even if they was covered with plush. I seen that she seemed to feel the blow. It’s hard for a woman to stand some things without showin’ it, although most of them can go with their shoulders bare when a man would feel more comfortable with his coat collar turned up.

“We started for the Chillingworths’ lodge, sixty miles up in the country, and I seen the minute Lord Flossie got in the tonneau that he’d never done any automobilin’ before, although he claimed he was an old hand at it and had left his mark on nearly every tree between Paris and Stuttgart. He had on a silk hat, because Juliet didn’t feel familiar enough, I s’pose, him bein’ a Lord, to tell him to put on a cap.

“I had him reachin’ for things to hold onto before we’d went two blocks, and every

Charles

little while, as we dodged through the streets, just missin' things and goin' around curves on two wheels, I could hear him askin' Juliet about me, wantin' to know if she was sure insanity didn't run in my family, or if I was a drinkin' man. He had his hat pulled down so far his ears was doubled up as though they'd wilted, and once, when we bumped into a hole where they'd torn out the pavement to hunt for a gas leak or something, we'd of lost him if Juliet hadn't grabbed one of his elbows, as he was goin' out, and pulled him back.

"When he got his breath again he asked how much further it was to where we wanted to go, and if there wasn't some way to come home on a boat or by rail.

" 'It's all right, your lordship,' Juliet told him. 'Charles is the best chawfer that ever turned a wheel, and there's no danger at all. Just let yourself swing with the car. Don't try to sit rigid. You'll soon get used to it. Can you swim?'

"He said he couldn't much, and wanted to know why she asked him.



"We'd of Lost Him if Juliet Hadn't Grabbed His Elbow."

Charles

“ ‘ Because you know we sometimes run over the sides of bridges, and there might be more or less danger if one couldn’t swim out.’

“ It seemed to make him kind of anxious, and he asked if we would cross any big streams or had life preservers with us. She told him then that it was only an American joke; but it mightn’t be when I get through with him.

“ Feelin’ sorry for the poor chap the way he had his hat pulled down, I put on all the speed we had and took it off for him. It landed between a coal wagon and a milk cart, and Juliet paid a boy a quarter for gettin’ it.

“ ‘ Now, Charles,’ she says, speakin’ almost harsh, ‘ you must be more careful. Lord Fourflush wants to have a chance to view the scenes as we go along.’

“ I didn’t say so out loud; but I made up my mind it wouldn’t be my fault if he didn’t see things that wasn’t on the map, and we started on again. We’d run several miles out in the country, and Lord Flossie seemed to be gettin’ used to it. The road was smooth and straight,

The Chauffeur

and he was settin' up and takin' long breaths, and when he wasn't pickin' things out of his eyes he was lookin' at Juliet so anybody could of told right off that it wasn't her money he was thinkin' about.

" ' Bless my soul ! ' he said. ' This is jolly good sport after all. I didn't know you had such roads on this side. I supposed there was nothin' but paths through the woods, don't you know ? ' "

" Pretty soon I seen a man comin' toward us, leadin' a cow with a calf trottin' along behind. Old Bossy commenced to act foolish the minute she found out we wouldn't stop. She ripped around from one side of the road to the other, and the calf started back where it come from. Even if Lord Flossie hadn't been there I wouldn't of wanted to do anything that would seem unprofessional, and it was too good a chance to let go by, anyway ; so I braced myself, and we shot ahead. The cow seemed to think at first that she ought to get in a fence corner ; but changed her mind at the last minute, and galloped out in the

Charles

road with her head down and her tail stickin' up like a flagpole on the gable end of a town-hall. In about four-eighths of a second the smash happened.

"The first thing I seen, after slowin' down, was the cow hangin' half across the fence with Lord Flossie's plug hat on one of her horns. Juliet knew enough not to jump, and was settin' in the tonneau, lookin' anxious at his lordship. He was worth lookin' at, too. He had his coat ripped up the back clear to the collar, and was restin' his head on a hill of potatoes, not seemin' to care much whether he ever took an heiress back to his ancestral seat or not. When I got to him he looked up kind of pathetic, and asked what I wanted. When I told him I was ready to help him into the automobile, he says:

"'Heavens! Isn't the thing smashed so bad that it won't go any more?'

"He was gettin' up when the man that owned the cow come a-runnin' with some more farmers who had been workin' in a field a little ways off. They had hoes and rakes, and I



"He Was Worth Lookin' At, Too."

Charles

didn't like the looks of them; but it seemed to me it would be a good chance to show Juliet I was a hero. As soon as Lord Flossie seen them he made a run for the automobile, and if Juliet hadn't told me to come on and chawf I'd of stayed right there and settled it with them. These people that think it's an act of patriotism to make trouble for the ones that have autos need some good lessons to make them more polite, and it's about up to me to learn them a few things.

"By the time I'd got hold of the wheel they'd circled around in front of us, and were comin', wavin' their weapons and yellin' at us to stop. It didn't take me long to butt through them, though, and after Lord Flossie got up from where he'd been tryin' to crawl under the seat Juliet said:

" ' Charles, you did that lovely. Don't you think he shows that he's a real sportsman, my Lord? ' "

"All the Lord said was: ' Upon my soul, it's jolly rum! ' "

"We run over the calf a little further up

The Chauffeur

the road, and after that nothin' much happened till we got to within about two miles of where we were goin', and I felt discouraged; but we started down a long, steep hill about that time, and after shootin' around a bend at the bottom, banged into a load of hay that had been left in the middle of the road, with one of the wheels broke.

"The Rumbler was wrong side up, in the ditch, when I got on my feet again, and Juliet was settin' on the hay, not seemin' hardly to know what had happened. As soon as she seen me she said:

" ' Oh, Charles, where is his lordship? Do you think he's had time to come down? ' "

"We both looked up; but couldn't see anything of him, and she slid off, me catchin' her in my arms. I'd go through it again any day, just to feel her soft little fingers the way they felt when she caught me by the Adam's apple. She looked worried, though, till we heard a groan under the wagon. Lord Flossie was stunned a little; but it didn't take him long to get on his feet after being drug out, and

Charles

we walked the rest of the way to the Chillingworths'.

“The next time Lord Fourflush goes automobilin' with us I wouldn't be much surprised if there was a vacancy in the nobility; but I'm sorry the Rumbler's gone up. It was a grand machine, and the things it's killed would be enough to start a good-sized stock-yards. But automobiles is like men. If they're fast they're soon all in, and if they ain't nobody but good old ladies seem to take much interest in them.”

The Chauffeur

XI

"WE have the finest automobile in our set," said Charles. "It's a sixty-horse-power, imported car, good for seventy miles an hour, when it goes, and Juliet broke a bottle of champagne against it, sayin': 'I christen thee Hard Cash.'"

"That's a queer name for an automobile," said Lord Flossie Fourflush, who was helpin' at the ceremonies.

"Not at all," Juliet answered. "It's warranted to go fast."

"About two hours after that, when we were zippin' along toward the Pocahontas Club, Lord Flossie bust out laughin' as though it was the funniest thing he ever heard in his life.

"By Jove! It was clever of you, Mrs. Thurlow, don't you know?" he says, "to name it the Hard Cash. Money makes the mare go,

Charles

and the automobile does the same thing. The horse must go, eh? By Jove! Jolly clever!’

“I’m willin’ to admit it wasn’t so bad for Lord Flossie; but you must remember he’d been thinkin’ about it a good while, and just bein’ around where you can look at the little woman is enough to make any person brighten up and have real thoughts every little while.

“When we’d got nearly to the club, Juliet asked him if he’d rather watch a polo game or keep on ridin’, and he said if it was all the same to her he’d like to look at some more of the country, as he didn’t s’pose he’d saw more than half of America yet; so we went on, and I tried to think how I could fling him up in a tree-top or onto a roof somewhere without hurtin’ the dear, little lady or lettin’ her think I done it a purpose; but there didn’t seem to be no chance.

“The Hard Cash slid through the air as smooth as though we’d been flyin’, and pretty soon I heard Lord Fourflush askin’ Juliet whether her money was all in her own name. She told him it was, and asked him about his

The Chauffeur

title and how long they'd had it in the family, and a lot of them kind of things, and it made me so mad to think they'd set there and fix up the deal right behind my back that I almost done something desperate; but desecration is the better part of valler as my old school-teacher Albert Springer used to tell us Lord Bryant says in his Essay on Man, so I bided my time. When it comes to bidin', I'm as good a bider, I'll bet, as you can find in this town.

"After we'd went along for about an hour, goin' through several towns so quick the people might of thought their eyes deceived them if they hadn't made sure by runnin' out in the road and sniffin', Juliet said she'd like to run the thing awhile, and told me to stop, so her and Lord Flossie could get in front. Then's when it commenced to get more interestin'. I couldn't shut off the motor. Somethin' had stuck, and stuck hard.

"I got Lord Fourflush to climb over the seat and help; but it was no use. She was goin' right up to the limit, and I knew if we



**"I Knew if We Ever Hit Anything It Would Be Like Fallin'
Out of a Balloon."**

The Chauffeur

ever hit anything it would be like fallin' seven miles out of a balloon. But there was one thing made me kind of glad. I knew they'd put my name and mebbly my picture in the papers, and I'd be the only one in my family that such a thing ever happened to. Everybody down where I come from would be jealous, too. Fame's something to be proud of, even if you can't be here to enjoy it; and what's the difference, after it's all over, whether you get it by fallin' in battle or buttin' through a brick wall? It was grand the way Juliet kept her nerve.

" 'Charles,' she said, after I'd took the wheel again, 'watch for a chance to turn into some field where there will be room enough to circle around and let it run down.'

"It was a grand thought to come out of a woman's head, and we hadn't went more than a mile or so further, sort of skippin' from one ridge in the road to the next one, before I seen a gate openin' into a big beautiful meadow, where the farmers was loadin' hay.

"We knocked down one of the posts goin'

Charles

through; but got inside all right and started to circle around. The hay was piled up in little stacks; so it didn't bother us much. The farmer's team didn't seem to think we had any business there, though, and started to run away. They had a good-sized load on; but it didn't hold the old mares back much, and they raced across the field twice without upsettin' the wagon.

"Once we nearly had a collision with them, and Juliet said it was a pity people in the country didn't have politeness enough to keep their homely old rigs out of the way at times like that, because if we happened to run into them it might take some of the varnish off of the Hard Cash. Then the wagon upset, and the horses went out the gate, leavin' the field clear for us; so it was more pleasant chawfing.

"There was some danger of tippin' as we went around the bends; but we all kept over on the inside, and it wasn't long before we'd got a pretty fair track made, only there was a ditch runnin' through the middle of the meadow, and when we crossed it everybody

The Chauffeur

had to hang on hard so as not to go up so far that the auto wouldn't be there when we come down. The only one that didn't seem to enjoy it was Lord Flossie.

"Juliet tried to get him to be enthusiastic, by tellin' him that if we'd only had an official timekeeper there we'd prob'ly have all the records broke, and you could tell by the way she spoke that she was havin' a lovely time. After we'd went around forty or fifty times and had the meadow pretty well tore up his lordship begun to get seasick, and I had to hold him with one hand and work the wheel with the other, him still bein' on the front seat with me.

"Juliet kept tellin' him right along that she sympathized with him; but it didn't seem to help him or make it any easier for me. When that had been goin' on so long that it almost got to be monotonous the farmer, who had run home when his team went away, come back with a gun. As we went past him at the upper end of the field the old man yelled at us to halt.

Charles

“ ‘ Did you ever hear of anybody with such horrible manners? ’ Juliet said. ‘ I wonder if he thinks we come in here because we like his miserable old field better than the road? ’

“ ‘ If you don’t get out of here I’ll shoot,’ he said the next time we went past.

“ Lord Flossie’s feelin’s got the best of him along about that time, and I couldn’t hardly blame the farmer for not wantin’ his property mussed up; but when I spoke to Juliet about it she said he ought to feel honored, because he could bring his grandchildren out some day and tell them a peer of the realm had been there.

“ ‘ Say,’ the old man yelled at us, as soon as he got another chance, ‘ I’m goin’ to give you people warnin’. You can circle around this way two times more; but the third time you do it I’ll let go.’

“ ‘ Don’t you think you could run up close enough to knock him from the fence? ’ Juliet asked. ‘ Don’t really hurt him, you know; but just make him nervous by tossing him around a little, so that he won’t be able to



“‘If You Don’t Get Out of Here I’ll Shoot.’”

Charles

shoot straight. I wouldn't want to have you cripple him, because the farmers are needed to bring in fresh eggs and things.'

" 'I might lift him a few rods, all right,' I says; 'but it would be risky, as long as I've only got one hand free. What do you say to me throwin' his nibs out on a pile of hay somewhere? That would give me a chance to do good work with the old man up there.'

" 'Mercy, no! You musn't let anything happen to his lordship,' she answered. 'It's too bad people who live in the country can't have more advantages to learn better breeding. Do you think he'll really shoot?'

" 'He looks like it,' says I. 'You might buy him off.'

" 'That's a good plan,' she said, gettin' enthusiastical. 'Ask him how much he wants for his farm.'

" 'So when we went around the next time I done so, and he said he was rentin'.

" 'What a stupid old creature he is!' Juliet said. 'I should think a man at his time of life would be able to own a farm; but it only

The Chauffeur

shows that you can't expect uneducated people to amount to much.'

"We made another round, and had only one more to go before the shootin' was to begin. It was the first time I ever seen the sweet little woman look as though she was goin' to lose her nerve. She got down between the seats and commenced to cry, and I felt as though something had to be done right away. My heart was touched, and I let Lord Flossie down so I could put one leg over him to keep him from rollin' out. That left me settin' up alone for the old man to blaze away at; but it wasn't thinkin' of gettin' hit that made me feel the worst. It was Juliet's tears, and me where I couldn't hold her in my arms and tell her I'd protect her.

"Along about that time I thought I'd try to stop the thing again. She worked as fine as you please, and I brought her up short just as the old man was raisin' his gun to take aim.

"When it was all over, and Juliet had paid for the damages, with Lord Flossie well enough to set up alone, she said the only thing

Charles

she was sorry about was that it couldn't of happened on a day when everything in life seemed tiresome and she needed a new thrill or two to keep her from broodin'.

"That's the way with women. They can't have joy in their cup without spillin' it on themselves, as Albert Springer used to say. Make them happy, and they'll be sorry thinkin' how sad they'll be some other time. It's a queer sex.

"We got home without a smash of any kind; but if his lordship ain't put out of business the next time we take him for an airin' it'll be because he's wearin' a charm of some kind, or won't break when he hits things."

The Chauffeur

XII

“It’s all over between me and Sadie,” said Charles. “I’m free now to marry Mrs. Thurlow as soon as Lord Flossie Fourflush is drowned, smashed, or scared away. The Waddumses were givin’ a house party out at their country place, and had a strike. Their cook and butler and all the rest of the help went out because old man Waddums discharged the coachman for upsettin’ a load of guests he was takin’ up from the station; so Mrs. Thurlow telephoned for me to take Mr. Cavendish our butler and Sadie out in the automobile to help till the party was over, and some of the other people furnished cooks and maids.

“It was the first time I had ever took Cavendish out in the auto, and I thought it would be a good chance to tame him a little just for his own good, and to make him have the right kind of respects for me when I get to be his master. Sadie, poor girl, thought she had a

Charles

right to get in front with me, and that left the butler in the tonneau all alone.

“ People stopped to look as we went through the streets, thinkin’ I s’pose, that it was either the President of Harvard or the British Ambassador, and newsboys run along behind us, yellin’ that the wheels were goin’ around and that our tires were full of air, tryin’ to make him turn his head ; but they might as well of tried to interfere with the dignuttty of a marble statute.

“ ‘ Very well, old stiff-neck,’ thinks I to myself, and gettin’ busy, ‘ if I don’t make you show you’ve got a joint or two in your verbatim before I get through with you I’ll quit chawfin’ and hire out somewhere to push a baby carriage.’

“ We had a run of seventy-five miles after gettin’ out of town, and it hadn’t rained for a good while, so the road was as dusty as the poetry shelf in a public library. We commenced to pass things before long, and I could hear the ends of Sadie’s veil snappin’ in the breeze. Cavendish’s whiskers stuck straight

The Chauffeur

back, whistlin' gay little tunes while the dust was gatherin' on them, and the telegraph poles seemed to be comin' toward us, almost tumblin' over one another because they were in such a hurry to get past; but he set there



"Cavendish's Whiskers Whistlin' Gay Little Tunes."

with his mouth lookin' like a thin, straight mark across his face, and if he hadn't said 'Oof!' once in a while when we struck bumps or hit the bottoms of hollows in the road a person might of thought we'd got him out of an Eden Musee and had him bolted to the seat.

Charles

“ It wasn’t a great while before we begun to get in the hills. Sadie hadn’t said much at the start. Something seemed to be on her mind, and she looked at me peculiar every little while, and took a long breath. I knew she’d begin to talk pretty soon unless I kept her busy doin’ something else, and I didn’t want to have no scene with her before Cavendish, anyway; but you might as well try to stop thunder by hol-lerin’ ‘Shoo!’ at it as to try to keep a woman from talkin’ by lettin’ her see you don’t want to hear what she’s goin’ to say.

“ ‘ Charles,’ she said, when I had to slow up behind a load of lumber, goin’ down a hill where the road wasn’t wide enough for us to get past, and I couldn’t smash into the wagon because the boards stuck out so fur behind that they’d hit us first, ‘ do you think you’ve been treatin’ me right lately? You act as though you had something on your mind.’

“ ‘ What do you mean about me not treatin’ you right?’ I asked, pretendin’ I didn’t understand her.

“ ‘ You know very well,’ she said. ‘ I told

The Chauffeur

Mrs. Thurlow about it, the other day, and she said she knew all, and there's another woman in the case.'

"It nearly took my breath away to think Juliet had been tryin' to help me out, and it showed she couldn't be expectin' to marry Lord Flossie, after all.

" 'Why didn't you come right out and tell me about it, instead of goin' to Mrs. Thurlow?' Sadie asked.

" 'I didn't want to hurt your feelin's,' says I.

" 'You poor, dear boy!' she says, lookin' soulful out through her goggles. 'I might of knew it; but never mind. I don't care. We can wait, can't we?'

" 'I can,' I told her; 'but what do you want to wait for?'

" 'For you to get the other woman to give you up,' she answered, lookin' as lovin' as the goggles'd let her.

"Then I seen she didn't know Juliet was the other woman, and it made me mad. I felt like upsettin' both of them in the ditch, and

Charles

I'd of done it, only I knew Juliet wanted me to get there with the Hard Cash in good shape, for they were goin' to have some road races, and she'd take it hard if we couldn't go in and beat the crowd.

“ But, as my old school-teacher Albert Springer used to say, life is like a hole dug in the side of a hill. You can see as fur as you've went, and that's all. You can look back over forty years of life and know all about it; but when you try to see a minute ahead it's only guess work. You've just got to dig your way along, and mebbby the next stroke of the pick or the next step forward'll bring you your fortune or a smash in the eye; so, never say die till your last breath's gone and you couldn't peep if you wanted to.

“ We'd got past the load of lumber and was zippin' along with the road nice and smooth, and I was tryin' to think of some way to make it a little excitin' when a couple of men that were comin' toward us with a team of country colts begun yellin' at us to stop, because the foolish young things had got to walkin' on

The Chauffeur

their hind legs and wantin' to go home. If Juliet had of been there it would of been my duty to see what kind of a colt buster our new auto is, because it would of most likely give her an excitin' thrill or two; but not carin' how Sadie and the butler felt about it, I run into the yard in front of a farm-house we were passin' and got mixed up with a lot of beehives.

"It only shows you never can tell, when you shut your eyes, what you're goin' to see when you open them again. I stopped the auto right there, with four or five of the hives upset, and the bees escapin', and jumped out before either Cavendish or Sadie knew what was wrong, them both bein' busy watchin' the trouble the men were havin' with their team in the road. In about a second after I'd got to a safe distance the butler give up bein' interested in the colts and let out a whoop, at the same time seemin' to forget that he had to keep up appearances.

"He hollered for help, and the bees got in his hair and on his neck and up his sleeves, and

Charles

kept him so busy he hadn't time to jump, even if he thought of it. He rolled around between the seats, and bounced up and down, and



"The Butler Let Out a Whoop."

dropped H's, and tried to hit the bees with his fists, but never seemed to touch them, and warmed up surprisin'.

The Chauffeur

“It was the first time I ever seen him without feelin’ as though I ought to hurry home and bathe my feet in hot mustard water. He blatted like a wounded doe—at least I s’pose wounded does blat—and bumped himself on the nose, makin’ it bleed, and stuck his face down in the cushions and tried to kick the bees off; but that only give them a chance to get up his pant-legs; and there’s no tellin’ what would of happened next if he hadn’t tumbled out backward by accident. As soon as he could get up he put his hands over his face and run, bumpin’ ag’in’ things, but not seemin’ to care much, and I s’pose he didn’t remember a thing about ever buttlin’ for the nobility.

“Sadie only got stung four or five times before she managed to get out. She had on a thick veil that made the bees get discouraged and go after Cavendish; but she wasn’t a bit cheerful when she come up to where I was. She said she never wanted me to speak to her again, and told me I couldn’t have her if I waited a thousand years. I was afraid she

Charles

mightn't stick to it if I showed her I was too willin' to give her up, so I pretended that I was very sorry, and asked her what was the matter.

"There wouldn't be many breach-of-promise suits if the men all knew as much about women as I do. You've got to make them believe you'll run right off and do something terrible to yourself if they won't have you. If you do that they'll claim it's all over between you forever, just to see what you'll do. The happiest hour in a woman's life is when the man she loves makes a blamed fool of himself to show how much he thinks of her.

" 'Don't say that,' says I, when she told me our hearts could never beat with the same old throb again. 'What have I done to make you want to take my happiness and smash it like a wad of gum under a rockin'-chair, and me an orphan, too?'

" 'You're a mean, miserable coward,' she said, rubbin' her ankle where one of the bees had effected a landin', 'and after this we are strangers forever. Thank Heavings, I have

The Chauffeur

found you out before we got any nearer and dearer together!’

“ ‘Sadie,’ I says, tryin’ not to show her how tickled I was, ‘don’t tell me them cruel words. Give me another chance.’

“ ‘Never,’ she said. ‘One chance is enough for me. Stand back! Don’t you touch me, you brute!’

“ ‘All right,’ says I. ‘If that’s the way you feel about it.’

“By that time the bees had got scattered, and I started for the automobile. Then she made a leap for me and tried to put her arms around my neck, tellin’ me please not to do anything desperut, for her sake; but I pushed her away and said:

“ ‘Stand back! You have went too far. You can’t jab your hat-pin into me and then make me lick it off.’

“Before she could do anything I was in the automobile. After I’d got it run out to a safe distance she got in the tonneau, and we overtook Cavendish about a mile up the road; but it was pretty hard to tell from the looks of his



**“Stand Back! You Can't Jab Your Hat-Pin into Me and Then
Make Me Lick it Off.”**

The Chauffeur

face whether he was goin' or comin'. I didn't expect he'd have any more dignuttty than a pup with one foot smashed, which only shows you can't keep a butler's true feelin's down very long at a time. He was more dignified than ever, because there was nearly twice as much of him."

Charles

XIII

"I USED to think," said Charles, "that I'd be ungentle to anybody that stood up face to face with me and made slurs about the Land of the Free and the home of the highball; but it's gettin' so a person can hardly help thinkin' sometimes we ain't got much freedom left that's not a hollow mockery. One great trouble is that watches are so cheap. Everybody has a watch now, and the first thing most people think about when they see an auto comin' is whether it's exceedin' the twelve-mile limit. Mrs. Thurlow thinks it's a disease and catchin'.

"Everybody that doesn't own an automobile gets mad if they see people that have them goin' faster than a man could push a wheelbarrowful of brick. You would think by the way people without machines look at us they thought we ought to be locked up as dangerous characters if we went swifter than a

The Chauffeur

rooster could swim. Juliet says she wonders what they think autos were made for. These Cyruses that ain't got any take it as a personal insult if your valves don't stick or some-thin' don't break every little while to make you crawl under and forget that you ever went to Sunday-school.

"When you have to walk home it makes them feel as proud as though it was a just punishment you had to suffer on their account; but there's always a sure cure for everybody who feels like that: it's to get autos themselves. Then they wonder why any fool ever expects them to go less than forty miles an hour—if they can. Juliet says what we ought to have in this country is a piece of statuary makin' it a crime for people with children to live along the public highways. When we get that kind of a law there'll be a chance to enjoy life, liberty, and the smell of gasoline, with malice toward none and a dead dog every three blocks.

"One day while the Waddums's house party was goin' on Juliet and me and Lord Fourflush

Charles

went out for a ride through the surroundin' country, and as we started off old man Waddums said we'd better look out because the farmers up that way seemed to think it was the open season for chawfers.

" 'We hear of somebody gettin' arrested nearly every day,' he said, 'and one chawfer was shot at day before yesterday for runnin' into a buggy and upsettin' two old ladies into some gooseberry bushes.'

" 'Isn't it ridiculous how excited people get over such things?' Juliet said. 'But don't worry about us. I always feel perfectly safe when Charles has his thumb on the throttle.'

" So we started out over the hills, and it would of been munificent if I could of only took Lord Flossie and threw him through the roof of a hot-house somewhere to wait till we got back. The Hard Cash was in the finest kind of shape. It seemed to act as though it was alive and wanted to show off. We zipped past the poor, little, old, fifteen-horse-power machines as easy as a greyhound could gallop away from a turtle.

The Chauffeur

“ Juliet was so happy she had to hum something every little while, and I s’pose it must of been because she was so close to me, for it was the first time we’d been out for three days. Bertie Flippendike’s man told me she won thirty-six dollars at bridge the night before, and that might of had something to do with it. We don’t need the money; but it always makes a person feel good to win, even if they’re bettin’ only for sociability.

“ We’d been goin’ along with the finest kind of luck for two or three hours, passin’ a constable every little while without stoppin’ to find out what he wanted to tell us and strikin’ a new town before our dust had settled in the last one; but it would of been too good to be true if something hadn’t happened. They’d never stopped us if it hadn’t been for a chain strung across the street of a homely little place where there didn’t seem to be much besides a church and a cheese factory.

“ It was no use tryin’ to argue with them. They arrested me and Lord Flossie right at the start, although Juliet took off her goggles

Charles

and smiled at them so sweet that if she'd been on a train without a ticket the conductor would of took it as a favor if she consented to ride free.

“ ‘ This is an outrage ! ’ said Lord Fourflush when a tall chap in his shirt-sleeves, with a red goatee, pulled him out of the tonneau.

“ ‘ Is it ? ’ the man with the goatee asked. ‘ I didn’t think it looked like that make. ’

“ Lord Flossie was goin’ to get sassy and tell him a few things about the way the plain people ought to act in the presence of the nobility, but the goatee man jerked him so hard that his collar-button come loose, and told him to shut up or he’d get fined for contempt of court.

“ They took us upstairs over a shoemaker’s shop, and after gettin’ us in a room that had a platform with a desk on it at one end, the man with the red tossles said the court was ready for business. We found out then that he was the justice of the peace, and it made me glad he’d took Lord Flossie out of the auto instead of tacklin’ me, because if he’d tried to



"The Goatee Man Jerked Him So Hard That His Collar-Button Came Loose."

Charles

jerk me around I'd of licked him so bad they'd probably of put me in jail for thirty years. I'm terrible reckless when I get started by people tryin' to fool with my dignutty.

"A lawyer come drivin' along from the county-seat just after we'd got arrested, and Juliet hired him to come up and take the case. As soon as the justice got on the bench the lawyer wanted to know how it happened that the court was goin' out and draggin' people in to be tried before it.

" 'You can't arrest people,' he says, 'and be the complainant and witness for the prosecution, and act as judge, too.'

" 'Can't I?' says the judge, huntin' around for his ink-bottle. 'You stay around here for a few minutes and see.'

"The lawyer and Juliet talked it over for a while in one corner. About twenty large, grown-up men had surrounded me, and a boy with a hairlip was holdin' Lord Flossie.

" 'Here,' says the judge, lookin' at me after he'd got his writin' things. 'Get on the stand and be tried. You're charged with runnin'

The Chauffeur

forty miles an hour against the statues made and provided. Take off your hat and solemnly swear, so help you God.'

" 'We waive examination,' the lawyer said, when he seen what was goin' on, 'and will furnish bail.'

" 'No, you won't,' the judge told him. 'This case is goin' to be tried right now.'

" 'But you are not proceedin' regular,' the lawyer answered.

" 'If this ain't regular enough to suit you,' the court said, 'you don't have to stay.'

" 'But you can't go out and drag respectable people in here like this without givin' them a chance to get witnesses or prepare their case.'

" 'If you don't keep quiet, I'll have you put out!' the judge yelled back at him. 'They ain't got no case to prepare, and it wouldn't do no good for them to get witnesses if they could, which they can't, because I seen them when they done it. They're guilty, and I fine them a hundred dollars apiece.'

"The lawyer said something about ap-

Charles

pealin' the case and wantin' something suspended; but the judge said: 'You can't have no appeal. We want the money.'

" 'Come,' the lawyer told him, 'this ain't Russia'; but before he could say any more the judge banged his fist on the table and fined him forty dollars for insinuatins that the court didn't know its business.

"Juliet was standin' over in one corner lookin' pathetic at me, and I seen that it was time for somebody to butt in with a little sense.

" 'Judge,' I says, 'I ain't got no fault to find with the kind of law you keep on hand, or the way you run court; but before you go any further I'd like to have you take a ride in the auto and see for yourself. We can have a spin up and down the road for a mile or two, and after that if you think we're guilty, all right, and no harm done. Nobody can say you didn't give us a fair show.' "

"I could see he thought it was a good thing, because it would give him a chance to say he was the only one in town that ever rode in an auto, and as long as he had his mind made up



“‘Come,’ the Lawyer Told Him, ‘This Ain’t Russia.’”

Charles

anyway he might as well do it as not. So when he give his consent I told Juliet to come on, and her and me and the judge got aboard, him settin' in front with me. Juliet wanted to stay behind unless they let Lord Flossie go too; but he winked at her to go ahead, so we started off.

“ I went easy till we'd got about a half a mile away, and then give her the high speed, not lettin' the judge see I had the monkey-wrench handy. He seemed to like it immense, and didn't say anything till we'd went a mile or so. Then he said it was time to go back, and I stopped, purtendin' I was goin' to turn around; but before he had time to see what was comin' I handed him one with the wrench and tumbled him out in the road. Juliet looked pretty scared; but I looked back and could see the judge settin' up, rubbin' his head. She wanted me to go back, because she was afraid they'd do something horrible to Lord Flossie; but I hoped they would, and kept on. She pled and almost cried, sayin' it was a shame to leave a member of the nobility that

The Chauffeur

way, and told me if anything happened to him she'd discharge me, and took on so hard that I had to give in at last, and we turned back. I made up my mind, though, that the next



time we got in a scrape with the auto it wouldn't be me that would take any chances tryin' to get out of it.

"' If I'd 'a' been the one that was left behind,' I says, after we'd got nearly to where

Charles

I threw the judge out, 'you wouldn't of come back to see what happened.'

"That seemed to waken up all her old love. She leaned over and put her hand on my shoulder, sayin' with one of them smiles that make a person feel as though something had broke loose inside of him: 'Charles, if it had been you that was left behind I'd never have come away at all.'

"I was goin' to grab her hand and kiss it, when we seen Lord Fourflush comin' down the road with his tongue hangin' out and his eyes bulgin' so you could of hung your hat on them. The crowd was only a little ways behind. I turned the auto, and when he'd clumb in we started on, not seein' any more of them on account of the dust. He told us he give them the slip durin' the excitement over what happened to the judge. Juliet thinks there ain't another chawfer in the business could of got out of it the way I did; but she says her conscience won't rest easy till she finds out who our lawyer was and pays him for the noble work he done defendin' us."

The Chauffeur

XIV

"I WAS layin' on my back under the auto the other day," said Charles, "and Juliet was handin' me things out of the tool-box, when I got to thinkin' how beautiful she was even with the black streak she had across her chin, not knowin' it was there.

" 'Charles,' she says, noticin' the way I looked, 'what's the matter?'

" 'I was just wonderin' why anybody ever thought beauty was only skin deep,' I told her. 'If you had your face blacked all over you would still be the beautifulest ever.'

"She acted for a few minutes as though she was away up on her dignutty; but women always have to pretend they don't like it when you hand out the caramels, although they'd get mad if you believed them and didn't get back to the same old subject. I knew she'd get over it before long, and kept workin' away, with her settin' in the dust, tryin' to look dis-

Charles

gusted. Every little while I'd take a glance at her to see if she'd got ready for more, and before long she laughed out loud.

" 'I want you to make me a promise,' she said.

" 'All right,' says I, thinkin' mebbly she was goin' to tell me she never could be mine unless I'd agree to have the weddin' in an Episcopal church before a lot of people, or something of that kind, 'what is it?'

" 'I want you to promise me not to eat potatoes or other starchy things,' she says.

" 'Why?' says I.

" 'I don't want you to grow stout. One of the best things I like about you is you're not fat. You are just slim enough. You always must stay the shape you are now.'

" 'You needn't be afraid of that,' says I. 'Fatness don't run in my family.'

" 'I never thought of it before,' she said; 'but I can see now that it would never do for a fat man to try to be a chauffeur. That was one trouble with my husband when he was alive. He never could of got under an auto-

The Chauffeur

mobile the way you are without gettin' somebody to dig a hole for him. Poor, dear Alfred tapered both ways from the middle.'

"Of course I could see she just turned it off that way so as not to pretend she was tryin' to let me know she liked my shape; but that's the way with women when they think they have went too fur.

"I'd got the thing fixed by that time and crawled out. It was terrible hot, and my hands were full of grease, so I couldn't wipe off the sweat. What do you s'pose she done? Took out her little bit of a handkerchief and rubbed it over my face. Say, did a woman that's five or six times as beautiful as an angel ever do that to you? There was something about the cologne or whatever she had on it and the soft way she touched me that made me feel as if I wanted to shut my eyes and sort of dream that I was floatin' off somewhere with my feet not touchin' anything but the high places. I believe if she done that to a man ninety-seven years old, with the locomotive attacks you and a stroke of palsy, it would



"She Took Out Her Handkerchief and Rubbed It Over My Face."

The Chauffeur

make him forget his grandchildren and want her to call him Willie.

“I couldn’t help feelin’ mad at the machine for not breakin’ down again, after we’d got started, so it could happen some more; but the thing buzzed along as though you couldn’t of busted anything, even by runnin’ against a union depot. We went on for quite a while, passin’ everything that was goin’ our way and me tryin’ to think of an excuse to crawl under again, when she suddenly said:

“‘Charles, slow up for a while, I want to talk to you.’

“I couldn’t help thinkin’ for a minute or two that I’d be kind of sorry, after all, to give up my freedom and settle down to married life; but one look at her knocked them kind of thoughts out of my head, although I hoped she’d be willin’ to have the weddin’ private, because I never was much of a fellow for wantin’ to show off before a crowd.

“When I’d slowed up she leaned over the empty seat beside me and said: ‘Sadie tells me it’s all over between you and her.’

Charles

“ ‘ Yes,’ says I, ‘ she’s give me up. At least I made her think it was her that done the givin’ up. It’s always best for a man to get out of it that way if he can. Then there won’t be any trouble afterward, on account of broken hearts.’

“ ‘ I’m afraid,’ she said, lookin’ at me rather queer, ‘ that you’re a trifier.’

“ ‘ Oh, no,’ I says; ‘ it was all a mistake, you know, her thinkin’ she was the one that made my heart bump around like a car off the track whenever she looked me in the eyes.’

“ ‘ Don’t you love her?’ _ she asked, appearin’ to be anxious.

“ ‘ I shouldn’t think you’d need to ask me that.’ I answered, givin’ her the ‘ between-you-and-me gaze.’

“ She took a long breath and got fearful solemn. I could see she was tryin’ to think how she could tell me I was near and dear to her; but I thought I’d better let her come right out plain and ask me to be the man of her choice, so she couldn’t throw it up to me, after I had the right to button her waist down

The Chauffeur

the back, that I had persuaded her against her will and only took her for the money. The great trouble with most people when they meet their proximity is they don't look ahead. If they done that it would save a lot of wear and tear afterward. By makin' her tell me her life will be like a pump without a sucker-rod unless I lead her tremblin' to the altar I can stand pat in future years, if she tries to call me down, and tell her I took her because I was kind-hearted and didn't want to see her sufferin' around, makin' me feel guilty at every suffer.

"While I was waitin' for her to say the words that would make our souls come together with a smack like a basket of eggs hittin' the sidewalk, I forgot to look ahead and run into the bank where the road turned sudden. I caught the dear little lady in my arms as we went out over the hood, and we landed in some elder bushes.

" 'Charles,' she said when we'd got untangled, 'I've been almost afraid several times lately that I'm losin' confidence in you. I be-

Charles

lieve if things don't take a turn for the better before long I'll have to go on a sea voyage for my nerves.'

"I didn't mind her complainin', because I couldn't think of much except how beautiful it seemed havin' her in my arms as we tumbled through the bushes. She had a scratch over one eye and her clo's tore in several places, which made me sorry for her and want to pet her, only she went over and sat down on the bank, tellin' me to see how the auto had stood it. The machine was all right, because we hadn't been goin' fast, but I thought after I got it backed up on the road that I'd crawl under again and see if I couldn't get her to wipe my face some more with her handkerchief when I come out.

"I tinkered around for about five minutes, gettin' all greased up and thinkin' sublime thoughts, when along come Charlie Flippendike and Sue Waddums. They stopped to see what was the matter, so I crawled out and wiped on the grass. When we started off Juliet challenged them to a race home, and

The Chauffeur

the one that lost was to pay the fine the next time any of us got arrested.

“ ‘ Now, Charles,’ the sweet lady said, ‘ if you don’t win I’m goin’ to get another chauffeur and let you run the lawn-mower ’; but I could see from her smile that she didn’t mean it. Women always like to tease me. I made up my mind, though, to win or smash things so they could never be fixed. Charlie had his new car, which was workin’ splendid. Him and Sue started off ahead, and it seemed as though they’d be out of sight before I could get the Hard Cash goin’ right; but she commenced chuggin’ regular pretty soon, and we went after them like a hound chasin’ a rabbit. There was a long hill ahead and half-way up we begun to gain.

“ Juliet was almost holdin’ her breath by that time. We both knew it was our only chance to win. If we couldn’t pass them before they got to the top they’d beat us, because we couldn’t gain a yard goin’ down grade or on the level.

“ ‘ Oh, hurry!’ she said, gettin’ excited

Charles

when it was only a little ways to the top. 'If they beat us I'll sell this thing and never ride in an automobile again.'

"My heart seemed to drop down about four stories when she said that. They'd got almost to the top and Sue Waddums was lookin' back and wavin' her handkerchief at us as though she thought it was all over.

" 'Charles,' said Juliet, 'you must win!'

" 'I'm tryin' as hard as I can,' says I.

"Sue give another flirt with her handkerchief. We didn't seem to be gainin' an inch on them then, and I could feel the engine humpin' itself as though it was goin' to jump out from under us. Even Charlie Flippen-dike looked around and smiled at us sort of pitiful as though he hated to beat us, but had to do it because it was his duty. It made Juliet almost wild.

" 'Oh, dear,' she says, 'can't you think of something to do? Get ahead of them and I'll give you——'

"She stopped, tryin' to think what to offer.

" 'What?' I asked.

The Chauffeur

“ ‘Anything, anything,’ she said, leanin’ forward, as though she thought that would help. ‘Only win and I’ll make you the gladdest chauffeur in the world.’

“Then luck come our way. A funeral procession turned down toward us from where the roads crossed at the top of the hill. Bertie turned to the left so he wouldn’t have to run through them where the carriages were comin’ around the bend from the right; but the road was bad over where he was, and I shot ahead on the good side, and went through the line where it was turnin’. We knocked down a horse and took a wheel from one of the carriages, but when we got through the procession we seen Bertie and Sue crowded over in the ditch, somewheres about twenty yards behind us.

“ ‘Charles,’ Juliet said, ‘that was perfectly grand. After this I’ll never see a funeral procession without havin’ a glad thrill. You are a hero. I wouldn’t of missed it for the cor’net of a duchess.’

“ ‘But I’ve got a promise comin’!’ I said,



“ ‘ After This I’ll Never See a Funeral Procession Without Havin’ a Glad Thrill. ”

The Chauffeur

lettin' her see I was as earnest as a boy that's e't too many green things.

“ ‘ Wait till we get home,’ she replied, and I knew by the way she said it that Lord Four-flush stood no more show than a college professor in Wall Street.”

Charles

XV

"My old schoolmaster, Albert Springer, used to have a motto that never went wrong," said Charles. "That was: 'Don't think because the bumble-bee has a velvety back that he's a soft thing.' Which only goes to show that although most things in life are different there's a good deal about them that's the same, after all. The other day when Tomlinson, who is chawfing for old man Waterbury, dropped in to see me, he says:

" 'Who was that out ridin' with you and the missus yesterday mornin'?' "

" 'That was Lord Fourflush,' says I.

" 'Is he the one the papers says it's rumored Mrs. Thurlow is engaged to?' he asked.

" 'Yes,' I says; 'but there's nothin' in it. If the papers only knew what I know they could print a story that would make society get a good deal more excited than it is about Juliet and Lord Flossie.'

"I thought it was just as well to let him

The Chauffeur

guess the truth, so he'd have the proper respects for me, and I give him a wink that made him let out a little whistle and ask how soon it was goin' to happen.

" 'The day ain't set yet,' I told him; 'but it'll come off whenever I say the word, and if you want a job after I take charge here, don't feel at all backward about lettin' me know. I'm not one of these people that lets their heads get swelled up by good fortune. I'll never be too high to forget my old friends because they haven't got the talents that make them my equal.'

" I seen that he was touched by the kind way I spoke; and I put my hand on his shoulder, lookin' him in the eyes as man to man; so after a bit he says:

" 'It's none of my business, and as long as you and the lady have it all fixed up between you, I s'pose it don't make any difference, anyway; but that chap ain't no more a Lord than you or me.'

" I come pretty near callin' him down for speakin' of me and himself as though we was

Charles

in the same class; but what's the use lettin' pride stand in the way when you have a chance to find out things it might come in handy to know? One of my strong points is bein' diplomatical when it comes to drawin' people out; so I got him to tell me all he knew, and it was a plenty.

“ ‘The minute I laid eyes on that boy,’ says he, ‘it struck me that I’d saw him somewhere before; but I couldn’t think where it was. After a while it come to me all of a sudden. You know I worked in Cincinnati before I come here, and it was there that the whole thing happened. He was callin’ himself Lord Bimsted then, and married a rich girl that was a friend of the people I worked for. A week or so after the weddin’ they found out that he wasn’t even an Englishman, and that he’d been in jail somewhere down in Kentucky for stealin’ a fiddle. The girl’s father kicked him through a window on the second floor when they found it out, and they paid him a good big price for promisin’ he’d never come back to bother the girl.’

The Chauffeur

“That afternoon Juliet told me to bring out the Hard Cash to take her and Lord Flossie up to the Pocahontas Club, and I couldn’t help feelin’ sorry for him as he was gettin’ in the tonneau with her. He looked so innocent and harmless I almost hated to think of the bump that was comin’ to him; but even if things had of been different between me and the lovely little lady I would of had a duty to perform, and duty never called to me yet without findin’ me there.

“We took a spin through the park before startin’ out for the club, and Juliet was so glad it would of made a man that just lost his job as postmaster cheer up to look at her.

“‘Charles,’ she said when a boy on a pony turned in the road ahead of us, ‘be careful not to run over him. Remember that he may have a mother, and I would almost rather be humiliated by havin’ you slow down for a few seconds right where people could see us than cripple him for life.’

“The boy turned down a side-path a little after that, so we didn’t have to bump him

Charles

over, and Juliet said we might as well go on out to the club, only she hoped something thrillin' would happen, because it seemed a shame to have such a munificent day go by without an adventure of some kind to make you think happy thoughts about it long, long afterward.

"I told her I had a feelin' that it would be thrillin' enough, all right, and I give Four-flush a look that would of made him climb out and run for the nearest woods if he'd had my brains; but he only stared like a Jersey cow when she thinks poetic thoughts about her last year's calf.

" 'Don't be afraid to run into things because they might be expensive,' the dear little woman says to me. 'That was one trouble with Alfred. He was always thinkin' of expenses, and couldn't half enjoy a smash-up unless he thought it would be cheap.'

" 'How singular,' says Lord Flossie, comin' out of his trance. 'I have always been led to suppose that the more an American gentleman had to pay for his fun the better he liked it.'

The Chauffeur

“That give me a chance, and I opened on him.

“‘I wonder,’ I says, ‘if that Cincinnati man would of enjoyed the bogus Lord he got in the family if he’d of had to pay more for him?’

“Juliet pretended to be thinkin’ about something else, and Fourflush give me a glassy look through his goggles. ‘What did you land on, anyway?’ I asked, ‘when you went out the second-story window?’

“‘Charles,’ Juliet says, blushin’ beautiful, and seemin’ to be a good deal upset, ‘what in the world do you mean?’

“‘Don’t be scared,’ I says, slowin’ down so I wouldn’t have to watch in front while I was talkin’, ‘I wouldn’t care to detect for a livin’, because detectives hardly ever have much of a standin’ in society; but I could of been one of the greatest in the business if I’d wanted to. Just ask the gent how much they paid him for promisin’ never to go back.’

“‘Bless my soul!’ says Lord Flossie. ‘The creature seems to be mad.’

Charles

“ ‘Not a bit,’ says I, ‘the girl was no relation of mine.’

“ Juliet looked suspicious, and asked him what girl it was we were talkin’ about.

“ ‘I’m blessed if I know,’ says he; and I must say he done the innocent-lamb trick beautiful.

“ ‘I s’pose you don’t know anything about the fiddle, either,’ says I.

“ Juliet ordered me to stop the auto then so she could smell my breath. We’d got pretty well out in the country, where there wasn’t much goin’ on, and I run up to the side of the road. Then, takin’ off my goggles and gloves, I says:

“ ‘Come, old man, you may as well own up. I know all about it. I don’t blame you much for takin’ the fiddle, for mebbly you was too hungry to work; but you hadn’t any right to make that sweet, trustin’ girl think she was goin’ to get a title when she didn’t have any more chance for it than the Prohibition candidate has to get elected President. That was cruel. Nobody with a heart as big as a vest button would of done it.’

The Chauffeur

“‘Stop!’ says Juliet, gettin’ excited. ‘This is an outrage! Take us home immediately. I will not hear another word from you.’

“Knowin’ that the worse she treated me the sorrier she’d be when she found out how noble I had came to the rescue in her hour of need, I didn’t pay any attention to her; but reachin’ over and takin’ Fourflush by the shoulder, I says:

“‘When I get through with you you’ll think what that Cincinnati man done to you was amusin’. Did you break anything when he kicked you out, or was the window open?’

“He tried to get loose; but I give him a yank or two that made him set down and keep still. Then Juliet commenced to cry. Of course I couldn’t stand that; so I let go of him and says:

“It’s all right, dear little girl. Don’t you worry. As long as you have me near, you can bet on yourself and give big odds that you’ll have a look in at the finish.’

“Then I told her the whole story about him



"Reachin' Over and Takin' Fourflush by the Shoulder."

The Chauffeur

stealin' the fiddle and runnin' away from jail and marryin' the girl; him settin' there with his mouth open and never sayin' a word. After gettin' through, I says:

" ' Now, we'll go home, and I'll show you how I found it out.'

" I expected he'd try to run away, and I wouldn't of cared much if he had, because it would of been an easy way to get him off of our hands; but he didn't.

" Instead of goin' straight home, I took them around by the Waterburys' and when I got there I called Tomlinson out.

" ' Here,' says I, ' I want you to tell Mrs. Thurlow where you seen this man before, and what he done when you knew him in Cincinnati.'

" He looked at Lord Flossie for a minute, and then turned as pale as a ghost.

" ' What's the matter?' says I. ' Don't be afraid to speak right up.'

" ' I made a mistake,' he says. ' He ain't the person I thought he was.'

" I can't bear to talk about it any more,



"I Know of One Who's Lookin' for a Job."

The Chauffeur

and if you hear of anybody that wants to hire a good chawfer I know of one who's lookin' for a job. But it only proves what Albert Springer used to say: 'If God had never made woman there wouldn't be any fools in the world.' "

THE END.



